THE
COMMONWEAL

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts, and Public Affairs.

Volume V | New York, Wednesday, March 30, 1927 | Number 21

CONTENTS

The New Inquisition 561
Week by Week 563
Productive Fortune 566
Morality and the Law 567
Dante and His Vision of Life ..... Katherine Brégy 568
I Know a Lady (*verse*) ..... Irene H. Wilson 572
The Symbol of the Dante Award ..... George N. Shuster 573
Conduct and the Cosmos ..... John A. Ryan 575
Dancer (*verse*) ..... John Hanlon 576
The Sinclair Lewis Industry ..... Michael Williams 577
Maryland Tercentenary ..... Mark O. Shriver 580
A Communication 580
Poems ..... Mary Rolwing, James J. Daly, Mavis McIntosh, Ethel Romig Fuller, Madefrey Odhner, Roland Ahearn 581
The Play ..... R. Dana Skinner 582
Books ..... George N. Shuster, Edwin Clark, Barry Byrne, J. Elliot Ross, Mary Kolars 583
The Quiet Corner 587

THE NEW INQUISITION

WHENEVER any political or ethical problem is nearing the point where illusions will have to be let go and the issue thrashed out with a full admission of its contentiousness, it is useful and edifying to examine the terrain upon which it will be decided and the parties who will busy themselves with the decision. "Orientation from the position occupied" (a phrase familiar a few years ago in tactical handbooks) is just as needful in the war of ballots as in the war of bullets. All signs at present verifiable would indicate that within a few months the people of the United States will be confronted with a religious issue and that it will have either to be frankly met or shirked a second time by a compromise that will damage one of the two great political parties past hope of speedy recovery.

To say that the religious issue was "injected" into the last presidential campaign by avowed enemies of Catholic faith and tradition tells only half the truth. Nothing is to be gained by treating its recrudescence as a sudden and peremptory challenge, nor by dreaming that a mere recital of the qualifications laid down by the wisdom of our forefathers for the highest office within the nation's gift will exorcise the spectre. "Odium theologicum" has undoubtedly been latent in America for years. A pretty good proof of how deep the virus has gone is offered by an editorial in a recent issue of the New Republic, a journal so dedicated to the liberal and non-sectarian solution in all possible conjunctures that its appearance in such a quarter might be taken as registering an extreme limit of prejudice.

It is not the purpose of the present article to examine the editorial, after Mr. Grewgious's famous method, point by point. There is internal evidence that it was written by someone not very conversant with Catholic practice and discipline. The "Catholic cook," for instance, whose "exceptional persistence" in church-going on Sunday mornings is noted, might throw some light on such a statement as that the Church refuses to "bestow the consolations of religion upon those who have strayed from her fold." There is evidence, too, that the tangled affairs of Mexico, rather than domestic problems, lie nearest the writer's heart. Such side-issues fall into their proper place beside the major contention. This is that the plain and popular citizen who is New York's state executive be invited to make his position clear upon a series of misgivings which kept the New Republic's support of his "political punch" a lukewarm and tentative affair three years ago, and may preclude it next year altogether. "What can

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

be done about it?" asks our didactic contemporary, and proceeds to make certain suggestions.

The first, and most vital, is that New York's governor shall abandon a "refusal to speak" upon the effect his religious affiliations might have on political action contingent to election, and let his admittedly powerful mind be "searched" a little more thoroughly than heretofore. A possible alternative to his silence, namely that full assurance is already felt by the very strong organizations of men of every shade of belief who stand behind him, is one the writer hardly skirts. A large body of opinion, representing, he feels sure, "the better part of the popular mind" demands enlightenment, is withholding its support till enlightenment shall reach it, and, failing enlightenment, will refuse to be led into darkness under the old Democratic party banner.

The two main points (we follow the New Republic's own order) upon which the recesses of Governor Smith's mind need to be explored by means of some political "Ask Me Another!" are Mexico and education. After admitting that the hierarchy "has publicly disowned any intention of fomenting armed rebellion" south of the Rio Grande, our contemporary goes on to give his reasons why this gesture of docility is an unsafe index in forecasting possible relations between Church and state nearer home. It does more. By an analogy by no means so clear to us as to its discoverer, it locates the eventual danger solidly and squarely in the educational sphere. "From the point of view of Catholicism, education is a religious activity and belongs to the Church. According to official American theory, it is a secular activity and belongs to the state. There are the germs of a serious conflict in this difference of opinion."

The conflict, we are then advised, is one whose repercussions are likely to extend beyond domestic limits and to plunge the United States, with their Catholic President at their head, into an embroilment whose mere possibility is "terrible to contemplate." The reason? "Ultimately what the Calles government demands is an opportunity of educating the Mexican Indian" and "we have yet to discover the Catholic who, in relation to this matter, does not see red."

Both instances seem singularly ill-chosen. In the first place, the right of Catholic parents to have their children educated, where possible, in schools chosen by themselves, is no longer a matter of American theory, even "official." It is "res adjudicata," resting upon the decision of the highest tribunal in the land. The pronouncement of the Supreme Court of the United States in the Oregon case, two years ago, is the Magna Charta of the parochial school. Any answer, therefore, that Governor Smith could furnish to a questionnaire on the subject would be Catholic in so far as constitutional and constitutional in so far as Catholic.

Also, so little have Catholics "excommunicated" the public school that probably many hundreds of Catholics who read these lines will be living in communities where, failing parochial schools, Catholic children attend it and rely for their religious instruction on such Catechism classes as can be held on Sunday afternoons or week-day evenings. That this is regarded as something very much below the desideratum does not affect the New Republic's argument, which is that there is a burning educational issue in America, upon which the chief executive, if a Catholic, can hardly be trusted to do his duty unhampered by "partly conscious controls."

Much the same is true of the Mexican imbroglio. That Catholics detest the Calles régime, that they do see a blight in it, terrible enough to earn the term "accursed," that their common sense and painfully acquired experience pierce such flimsy special pleading as that the "ultimate" (precious word!) end of closed churches, imprisoned or scattered religious, wholesale arrests and firing squads is a "better opportunity of educating" peons, is perhaps the most accurate observation the New Republic permits itself to make. But that any President, loyal to his oath and to the precepts against foreign entanglements left behind by the greatest American who ever took it, would involve his country in a foreign adventure that must alienate the whole of South America for a generation, not because the national interest called for a diplomatic rupture, but because religious resentment lent a relish to the adventure, is a presumption so monstrous and insulting that it is hard to be courteous while considering it. But we may, without offense, ask this: What possible value would the assurances which the New Republic thinks timely, possess, given by a man who could assume office with any such design in the back of his head? Merely to put the question, it seems to us, is to answer it.

But indeed, all the implications of this extraordinary contribution to prevailing confusions are so bizarre that one can only conclude its author, in an honest zeal for the party out of power and an honest dismay at the dilemma that seems to confront it, has let himself be carried beyond the confines of common sense and good taste. For, in no department whatsoever of civilized life as it has come to be lived, are such undertakings as he suggests made a prerequisite for acceptance. Neither in army, navy, judiciary, nor at the marriage altar, nor before ordination to the ministry—nor at any contingency where solemn oaths are taken and solemn vows registered, has the thought ever entered the head of man to present the candidate with a list of possible temptations where loyalty might be strained, and to ask a separate understanding on each. Rightly, the world in its wisdom assumes the greater to include the less, the general the particular. Men, after all, live by faith, and, where the character of the elect is not sufficient guarantee, other guarantees are an idle gesture. To ask more, as does the New Republic, may have the air of imparting clarity into a dubious situation. But what it really means is the erection of a brand new inquisition in our midst.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE COMMONWEAL

Published weekly and copyrighted 1927, in the United States by the Calvert Publishing Corporation, Grand Central Terminal, New York, N. Y.

MICHAEL WILLIAMS, Editor

Assistant Editors

THOMAS WALSH — HELEN WALKER

HENRY LONGAN STUART — GEORGE N. SHUSTER

JOHN F. MCCORMICK, Business Manager

Editorial Council

T. LAWRASON RIGGS — JAMES J. WALSH

CARLTON J. H. HAYES — R. DANA SKINNER

BERTRAM C. A. WINDLE

United States: $5.00 — Foreign: $6.00

Canada: 5.50 — Single Copies: .10

WEEK BY WEEK

ANNOUNCEMENT by the Canadian prime minister that the present government of the dominion favors a policy of reciprocal trade agreements with the United States, has not met with any cordial response in Washington. This is not surprising, but at the same time, it is scarcely fair to ascribe the feeling at Washington entirely to the fact that the Republican party-leaders will not allow a finger to be placed on the tariff as it now stands. It was the United States, under a Republican President, which made the last overtures for reciprocity between the two countries; and Canada which rejected the proposals. At that time, when Sir Wilfrid Laurier went to the country on a platform whose chief plank was the ratification of the agreement, there was little thought that the premier who had held office for eighteen years was courting defeat. He had built up a powerful machine, his personal popularity was immense, and the issue which he had chosen, and which a then young cabinet minister, W. L. Mackenzie King, so ably presented, seemed logically sound. The opposition could not satisfactorily answer the arguments advanced, and there was every indication of another Laurier sweep. Then President Taft made a thoughtless remark which some Canadians felt reflected on the dignity of their country. Immediately, the tactics of the opposition changed. Banners appeared bearing the slogan, No Truck or Trade with the Yankees, and Laurier was deposed.

NOW it is not to be thought that the present premier of Canada, who lost his seat at that election, has forgotten the episode. He has been a constant believer in reciprocity, but he is not looking for trouble. If he returns with new overtures, he does so with something not far removed from a threat. If arrangements for trade cannot be made which shall be mutually satisfactory, and it is to be a case of each country looking out for itself, there can be no question that Canada will demand that trade barriers be erected against the United States, and in place of a reciprocal exchange of concessions there will be trade war. There is no reason why Canada should be given a lot for nothing; but there is every reason why a careful examination should be made by each country of the ground on which to build a memorial to the common sense of both.

DISCUSSION of the debt problem seems to have narrowed down to what is, after all, the important point. Is the financial relationship between the peoples who were involved in the great war to be this: one debtor nation—Germany—destined to pay off during an indefinite number of years all the cost of the war; and one creditor nation—the United States—favored to receive, through one source or another, everything that is paid during the same number of years? A situation something like this was conceded, perhaps unconsciously, by Secretary Mellon's open letter to President Hibben, of Princeton University. "The sums paid us," remarks that letter, "will not come from taxation, but will be more than met by the payments to be exacted from Germany." Now if it be true that Germany is to shoulder the sums loaned by the United States, a most peculiar complexion is put upon the whole transaction. First, it actually looks as if (though of course the truth lies elsewhere) we had entered the war in order to guarantee repayment of obligations which a German victory would have jeopardized. Secondly, the Allied peoples are paying off their debts, not because they borrowed, but because they won. In other words, the source of every cent to be received by us is the war itself, and not the era of pacification and reconstruction—the war which must cease in practice as well as in historical chronicle if western civilization, to mention only one thing, is to endure. Finally, a very real source of the agitation which resulted in bringing the debt problem to the fore in American politics was resentment against the Allies and latent friendship for Germany. But if Germany is the one real debtor, this resentment has acted blindly and against its own actual purpose. One must, therefore, at least face the conclusion that a readjustment of the whole debt problem may be the great beneficent "Locarno of the future," which will bring the whole episode of the great war to a practical and abiding close.

MISS Katherine Marie Cornelia Brégy, who has been selected as the winner of the Dante Prize of $1,000, awarded by The Commonweal, and donated by Mr. John S. Leahy of St. Louis, Missouri, has stood for some years at the head of the Catholic critics of letters

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and poetry in America. She is the daughter of the late Honorable F. Amedie Brégy, Judge of the Circuit Court of Pennsylvania. She was born in Philadelphia, and was graduated from the Philadelphia Seminary in June, 1899. She then continued her studies in English literature and classics at the University of Pennsylvania. In 1904, she responded to the spiritual call and entered the Catholic Church, with which her family had possessed long ancestral affiliations. Her work in the literary journals showed from the beginning a very fine perception of stylistic and humanistic values, and it was greeted by immediate recognition from the best critics and authorities. On the publication of her first collection of essays, The Poets' Chantry, she obtained an ample tribute of appreciation from English as well as American critics. This has been reaffirmed on the appearance of a later series of essays published under the title of Poets and Pilgrims, and dealing with the leading figures in Catholic poetry in recent English and French letters. It is a great pleasure to find her conservative culture and fine literary acumen recognized by the scholarly judges of the Dante contest.

THE Senate filibuster has so seriously affected various departments of the government that future requests for new rules to regulate senatorial procedure are likely to have a decided official ring. That Senator Reed's investigating committee is badly handicapped in its efforts to get at important facts must be deplored, whether or not one feels that the committee's tactics and personnel are exemplary. Public opinion had demanded light on diverse shadowy situations; and it is not good American principle to cast darkness abroad by means of a subterfuge. More important, however, is the news that because of insufficient funds the federal courts must subject themselves to an embarrassing and troublesome regimen of economy. Juries cannot be paid, judges and court attendants must wait for their salaries, cases of various kinds must hang fire—all because the nation's trusted servants could not agree to make provision. Things are bad enough when the legislative power gets in its own way, by pulling fuses in the elaborate system by which the energy of federal rule is distributed. But it is really deplorable that the judiciary, upon which the administration of right and wrong directly depends, can in practice be made the sport of senatorial princes, irate over one another's pet schemes, to the point which makes government householding precarious. Citizens should always hesitate to modify federal custom, even though it be merely convention, for such custom does guard-duty round about necessary principle; but in the case of filibusters like the last, a real opportunity for reform presents itself.

RECENT issues of the New York press featured the strange case of a public grade school in one of our western states which was conducted for over a year for the sole benefit of one scholar, the daughter of a railroad section-hand nearby, and which, owing to the transference of this employee to another section, suddenly found itself scholarless. The fantastic situation, which in this case seems to have been due to the existence of parochial schools nearby, is not confined to one country. During an attack on inflated educational statistics at a recent session of the French Senate, the case of a mixed school in the department of Maine et Loire was reported, in which the government school-master has a single pupil, and the government school-mistress none at all. In commenting upon the incident, the Journal des Débats rather naïvely contrasts the pitiful results reaped by the Department of Education with the swollen proportions of the budget they present to a hard-pressed nation—two billion francs having been appropriated for the current year for primary education alone. Those in touch with educational policy in France, more especially with the post-war syllabus of the Ecole Normale, so scathingly exposed by M. Maurice Brillant in his recent book, Quelques Sacristains de la Chapelle Laïque, will be less inclined to wonder at the sums which governors committed to the secularization of the growing generation, are content to write off as overhead, and which the governed are, apparently, content to pay for anti-clerical insurance.

A RECENT letter in the London Tablet from Lady Winefrede Elwes, testifies that the Pius X School of Liturgical Music, founded by Mrs. Justine Ward at the New York Convent of the Sacred Heart, is rapidly attaining an international significance. Lady Elwes states that Miss Honiss, a pupil of Mrs. Ward's recently arrived from New York, has already started a course in liturgical singing at the Convent of the Holy Child, Cavendish Square, and is about to organize another at the Assumption Convent, Kensington Square. In conclusion, Lady Elwes writes: "Miss Honiss will give an inaugural address to explain the system on Saturday, March 5, and all your readers who are interested in music are cordially invited to come. It is to be hoped that teachers of music will come to learn from her, so that they may propagate the work in schools throughout the country. This letter has the approval of His Eminence Cardinal Bourne." Lady Elwes, the widow of Gervase Elwes the well-known singer, is herself one of the most distinguished English Catholics, and her enthusiastic commendation of the work instituted by Mrs. Ward is bound to have a deep effect both in London and the provinces. We Americans may well be proud that it is to an American woman and an American school that English Catholics are turning for the reform of their church music. We must not allow them to outdo us in the success with which they put into practice the musical counsels set forth in the Motu Proprio. There should be a school like that of the Sacred Heart in every diocese throughout the length and breadth of America.

LADY ELWES heard the Pius X Choir when Mother Stevens brought it to Boston for its concert

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

under the auspices of Cardinal O'Connell. She says of this experience in the Tablet letter: "Young girls, mostly under high-school age, and in no way naturally superior to others, sang ancient polyphonic music and liturgical chants with a gradation of tone and accuracy of intonation which was astounding. They composed part songs on the blackboard without hesitation to any theme that was given to them, and read in parts with the utmost ease. The restoration of the Gregorian chant as the fitting expression of the Divine praises is Mrs. Ward's life work, and her method of teaching music is a means to that end. Her idea is that music, being basic, must not be reserved for the gifted few, but must be brought easily within the grasp of every child. To accomplish this she embodied her method into a system which reduces the teaching of music to a remarkable degree of simplicity and efficiency. I could not help longing that England might share with America the great advantages of being able to learn this wonderful method, so that our churches should also resound with beautiful liturgical singing; and to my joy my wish has suddenly been realized."

AMONG social welfare organizations which see clearly the vast implications of their work, the Charity Organization Society of New York City occupies a prominent position. Realizing how little is known by many workers who enter the field, of the significance of the Christian religion in history and human life, the society has appointed a committee whose business it is to encourage knowledge of the churches and their principles. On March 17, there opened a series of meetings at which the visiting staff of the society will be addressed by clergymen of various creeds. Reverend Peter Hoey, of the Paulist Fathers, set forth the point of view of the Catholic Church in the first of two talks. He is to be followed by representatives of various Protestant denominations; and the series will close with an address by Dr. Richard Cabot, of Harvard University. "The Charity Organization Society," says its spokesman, "is non-sectarian. One of the fundamental planks of its philosophy of work is that in trying to mend broken homes, it realizes there is nothing more important for its workers to do than strengthen the spiritual life of its clients. Our workers do not try to influence their clients' beliefs, but they are concerned that they should vigorously cleave to some belief if their lives are to be stabilized." A program so discerning deserves and will receive the approbation of all Catholics and Protestants familiar with social service.

THE National Catholic Alumni Federation (as we have said upon numerous occasions in the past) can accomplish a vast amount of good in this land when everybody who should do so, rallies to its support. A second annual bulletin, just published, recounts the proceedings of the convention held last November, and gives a wealth of information concerning the organization, its purposes, and its personnel. The addresses delivered by various prominent men stress questions of academic and general social interest to which every educated Catholic ought to give some attention. We quote the following words by Mr. Edward S. Dore, president of the federation, in the hope that they will attract attention, not merely to themselves, but also to the work on behalf of which they were spoken: "Consider the futility of gathering young men together for four years and then permitting them to be scattered during the whole of the remainder of their lives. Who can better represent the college? The untrained undergraduate on whom the college has not yet deigned to set the seal of its approval? Or the alumnus who is literally the 'fostered' and 'nurtured' product on whom the college has placed the stamp of its approbation? How shall the continuous growth in the graduate's education and loyalty to his alma mater be achieved? The one answer is that some form of that continuing contact with minds trained as his, must be provided in the life after college; that is to say, the alumni must somehow be brought together and kept together."

IN RECOMMENDING the use of the rosary to Protestants, President James A. Beebe, of Allegheny College, acted courageously and helpfully. He drew attention to a form of devotion which countless millions of Catholics during many centuries have used with profit and delight. The rosary has taught the children of generations "how" to pray, and it has been the treasure, even the last resource, of saints. But the point of view from which Dr. Beebe approaches the matter is peculiar and interesting. "By using the rosary we would have definite symbols from which visual pictures could be taken, holding the mind to the meditation at hand," he said. "The only difference between reverie and meditation is that one represents uncontrolled thought, while the other stands for controlled and directed thought, out of which some permanent good may come." This opinion is certainly quite correct psychologically, and yet it does not cover all the things which characterize Catholic use of the rosary. Various oriental religions also employed strings of beads, or ropes with knots tied in them, as devices to aid meditation and prevent distraction. The Catholic rosary, which has had a long and fascinating development, adds a formal element—incorporating first of all a nearly complete statement of the fundamental tenets of the Faith, and adding in the second place those purely practical advantages which are attendant upon reiterated prayer. To every bead there is attached a "benefit," or even an indulgence.

IF, THEREFORE, Dr. Beebe and his friends are going to take up the practice of the rosary, it behooves them to look over the ground very carefully. If they decide upon a rosary merely as an instrument to aid meditation, they will be accepting a psychotechnical aid from oriental mysticism, and not from Christianity. Moreover, history proves that in this sense, the rosary

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was confined almost exclusively to monastic circles, its popularity beginning when definite prayers were attached to it. Mediaeval Christian minds relied upon visual representation to an extent which would have seemed bizarre to the Orient. To them, repeated Aves were not merely so many services rendered to Our Lady, but also little "word pictures" which recalled her to mind and drew attention to the great mysteries in which she had been a central figure. Working from this beginning, the masters of the Catholic soul, from the Popes downward, added other elements and blessings until the rosary of today is not only marvelously useful, but wonderfully complex. We trust that in the end, Dr. Beebe and his friends will be able to accept it quite as it stands—Marian devotion, mysteries of the Faith, indulgences—and act accordingly.

ALTHOUGH death came to Bishop William T. Russell, D.D., of Charleston, South Carolina, at a comparatively advanced age, one cannot help feeling that an exceptionally able man has been cut down in his prime. Great vitality, rare gifts of scholarship and literary grace, a generous tact in recognizing the achievements of others—these and other virtues distinguished the man whose later years were devoted to building up the press department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference. The editors of The Commonweal found in him a sturdy friend and counselor. His Maryland, the Land of Sanctuary, the standard popular exposition of Calvert history, was also to a large extent the documentary background of the Calvert Associates. In less official ways, many writers and students throughout the United States discovered that in Bishop Russell they had an interested, sympathetic spectator. Other aspects of his personality were no less marked. As secretary to Cardinal Gibbons, as historian of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, as an army chaplain, and as the sponsor of the annual "Pan-American Mass" in Washington, he identified himself closely with the recent progress of the Church in the United States. Coming to the see of Charleston in 1916, he was the successor of two of the greatest and most interesting prelates in American history—Bishops England and Lynch—and, like them, he was a force in changing the attitude of the South toward a Church little known and understood there.

THAT Aimée Semple McPherson should have been offered the leadership in a proposed $100,000,000 evangelistic tabernacle circuit, patterned on the Keith chain of vaudeville theatres, is as appropriate as it was inevitable. The energetic reformer has everything that a headliner on the "big time" should possess—personality, wonderful advance advertising and, as Heywood Broun pointed out a few days ago, a most alluring name for the electric light display over the entrance. But what is this about the suggested engagement of the Reverend Billy Sunday as co-star? This is not fair to either of the distinguished performers. Each of them is versatile, but also each is distinctly individualistic. Moreover, the suggestion smacks of thoughtlessness in that it would altogether rob "Ma" Sunday of her share of the spotlight. There are other aspects of the plan which will require careful consideration if it is to be carried out successfully, as for instance, the matter of guarantees. The belief that all that is needed to evangelize America is the raising of $100,000,000 and the employment of Aimée Semple McPherson as evangelist-in chief is—and will have to be—touching.

PRODUCTIVE FORTUNE

THE excellent financial condition of the country is evidenced by the Treasury plan to refund the Second Liberty Loan through an issue of 3½ percent five-year notes. Through this operation bonds now due will be called in, and the entire issue will have been redeemed long before the date of maturity. Moreover, a saving of millions in interest will materially reduce the burden carried by the Treasury. The warm commendation which this plan has received in banking circles is probably due to the proof it affords that the national debt is decreasing steadily and that rates of taxation may soon be lowered again. When the various war-time loans were raised, they were considered a serious test of the nation's ability to pay. Later on, when the project of a soldiers' bonus became a topic of conversation, even more mournful prophecies of financial downfall made themselves heard. But the astounding tide of American prosperity has swept over them all with very little difficulty. In some ways, both the loans and the bonus have turned out to be distinct advantages. The first did something to encourage wide-spread thrift, and the second succeeded in forestalling all question of pensions, at least for a long while to come.

Of course, there are other proofs of the magnitude of the national hoard. During the first six weeks of 1927 over one billion dollars in new bond issues were absorbed by American buyers without seriously impairing the value of extant flotations. Bankers report that even now there exists a tremendous reserve buying power, which is interested in purchasing bonds that offer a fairly high rate of return on sound security. The obvious fact that this power is to a large extent in the hands of small investors indicates that the average citizen has been able to save far more than he could ten or twenty years ago and still keep up with a standard of living which has improved steadily. Nevertheless, there is grave danger in the circumstance that money, which must bear fruit if it is to maintain its value, is being directed into industral channels already bearing very nearly the maximum productive cargo. The cotton industry, for instance, has recovered temporarily owing to the drop in the price of the raw product. Even so, however, it is likely enough that overproduction by the mills will induce congestion and the evils of a shut-down throughout the industry. "Too

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

much money," aggressively active in the limited field of commerce, may prove a mixed blessing if it means lowered productivity to the average investor.

Meanwhile, it is interesting to speculate upon whether financial fortune has been able to bring about the general civic advantages expected of it. An industrial bulletin calls our attention to the "vast changes which have taken place in our standards of living. Automobiles and radio have come. A thousand inventions have added to our enjoyment of life." Educators inform us that, at least from the numerical point of view, the development of the national mind is proceeding at a great pace. And we have it on the authority of Mr. Ralph Adams Cram that "one of the most astonishing experiences in my long life is the recent rising up among us of great artists ready to serve." Even religion, which seems to many materialistically minded people a "side-issue," displays a rugged vitality and missionary spirit which seem to promise magnificent things. Doubtless all three last named—education, art, religion—have to some extent profited by the fact that more money has been made available for their operations, and that people generally have had more time to consider them. But opposed to all this is the very important fact that industrial acceleration is the basic rhythm of our living—an acceleration which has created a modern urban life more and more wholly dependent upon organization and its accessories and less and less able to stand on its own feet. This, an ominous fact in many respects, merits grave meditation.

MORALITY AND THE LAW

ONCE more the question of raising the standards for admission to the bar is being agitated, with much emphasis being placed on the benefits which will accrue to the standing of the profession as a whole if at least a partial course in arts at some recognized university is demanded of every candidate for the bar. That a barrister should be not only "a gentleman learned in the law," but also one with some general knowledge of other things, would appear a self-evident proposition based on self-interest, if he is to make a success in his chosen field. With such a declaration there can be no dispute.

But whether the acquisition of a certain amount of general education will correct certain evils in the profession as a whole, as most of the advocates of the proposed change so confidently assert it will, is another matter altogether. There seems to be a widely prevalent idea that more book-learning must inevitably raise the standard of morals. Leaders of the bar who discuss the proposed regulations while they deplore the condition of criminal law practice, evidently accept this idea as a postulate. Yet if ever there was a profession which showed that education and morals are most separate and distinct, it is the profession of the law.

The criminal knows this. When he seeks a "mouthpiece," he is not deterred in choosing his counsel by realization that his adviser has read many books other than those relating to the law; on the contrary, he has high hope that this additional knowledge may be applied to the laws of evidence in such manner as to obtain for him speedy enlargement and freedom to plan other campaigns against society. He is not afraid of book-learning as a moral force—some of the smartest of his fellow-craftsmen are distinguished Latinists or men like Gerald Chapman, strangely using their leisure to extend their general knowledge or to improve their appreciation of good literature. Book-learning, he figures, "never did them no harm" as criminals any more than it influenced those eminent young students, Leopold and Loeb, to curb their criminal instincts.

There is another aspect of this question which invites speculation. Let it be granted that men of more culture and refinement might be obtained for the profession if a whole or partial course in arts at a standard university or college were insisted upon as supplementary or complementary to the study of the law, what guarantee is there that the moral influence resulting (if moral influence did result) would be applied to removing what the Chief Justice of the United States has described as a blot on the nation—the administration of criminal law?

The college-trained lawyer seldom seeks to practise at the criminal bar. The prizes of the profession are not to be won there, but in the civil courts and especially in the realm of corporation law. It is not to be denied that the injection of a little more morality into the concepts of some corporation lawyers might be beneficial, but meanwhile, where is the uplift of the criminal practitioner to be sought?

Not in colleges, even if enough students can be induced to forego the monetary rewards of civil practice and devote themselves to work in the criminal courts. Colleges may do much for young men, but they do not specialize, in most cases, in moral development. Integrity and moral qualities such as the non-college trained young Springfield lawyer, Abraham Lincoln, early displayed and throughout life developed, are not the result of book-learning, but of self-discipline and acknowledgment of obligations to a power that is greater than self.

That homely philosopher of the day, Will Rogers, in commenting on a bill before the California legislature to regulate the conduct of members of the bar, asserts that you cannot make a lawyer honest by an act of the legislature—that the only way this can be done is to work on his conscience, but intimates that the task is a difficult one at best, because lack of conscience is what makes him a lawyer. This intimation may be an exaggeration, but there can be no question that the practice of the law is often a great strain on consciences often infirm and sometimes almost inaudible. And book-learning, without moral guidance, has no more effect in the strengthening of conscience than an act of the legislature.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DANTE AND HIS VISION OF LIFE

By KATHERINE BRÉGY

"MY FRIEND, but not the friend of fortune"—that is the description of Dante which he puts upon the lips of the blessed Beatrice when, at the opening of the Divine Comedy, she summons Virgil to rescue her poet from the "dark wood" of his wanderings. So, apparently, in his riches and his poverty, he liked best to think of himself: and after 600 years there seems no better way for us to think of him. Stranger and pilgrim upon earth, a tragic comedian he must remain to the common-sensible man—but friend immortally of the woman who had been his revelation first of human love and then of divine wisdom.

Dante Alighieri lived in what Wilde has aptly called "symbolic relations" with his own age: and it was, of course, one of the most stormy and most stimulating in human history. He had the good fortune to be born in the second half of the thirteenth century—very arch of the bridge of mediaevalism which stretched, by way of the dark ages, back to the old order of dubious, glorious antiquity; by way of the renaissance, on to the paradoxes of our glorious, dubious modernity. When, in the May of 1265, he was born at Florence, Italy was in the midst of her long Guelf and Ghibeline warfare. Manfred as hope of the waning empire and Urban IV as that of the Papacy, faced each other; while Charles of Anjou had arrived in Italy to settle these perpetual feuds as the French Pope naturally thought they ought to be settled. It happened that his coming did establish the supremacy of the Guelf party, to which Dante's father belonged, in Tuscany. But the bitter Black and White controversies were still ahead, so that anything called peace in thirteenth-century Florence was merely in the nature of a breathing space.

Yet if Italy—in fact, the whole seething world of Europe—knew little external peace, it knew marvelous creative energy in every field and an amazing interest in politics, philosophy, theology, and a few other sciences and arts. It was a time of high lights and heavy shadows. Francis of Assisi and Saint Dominic were less than half a century dead when Dante was born. Aquinas, the Angelic Doctor, and Bonaventura, the Seraphic Doctor, were still living: so were Roger Bacon and Albertus Magnus, grown already old, while Duns Scotus and Meister Eckhart were almost as young as our poet. Saint Louis reigned in France, although his life and the Christian hope in the East were soon to be sacrificed in the desperate hope of the last Crusade. All over Christendom legal forms were becoming settled, and chivalric grace was tempering the force of feudalism. The universities of Bologna and Oxford were thriving, while that of Paris, a century after Abelard, must have seemed already venerable. And everywhere men and women, too, rejoiced in poetry, in romance. The vernacular was emerging, daring to lift its young, sweet voice in songs of troubadour and minnisinger, in the love poems of Italy and the prayer poems of England. Mystery cycle and miracle play rubbed shoulders with the Arthurian legend and the naïve sophistication of Aucassin and Nicolette or the Romaunt of the Rose. And wherever the Gothic inspiration had lifted up men's souls and hands, they were already fashioning a Europe "new washed to its irradiant birth" in the sister arts. One does not like to remember that of our familiar Florence Dante can have known only an unfinished Baptistery and the beginnings of Santa Maria Novella, Santa Croce, and the Palazzo Vecchio. But in Paris he must have seen Notre Dame in her mysterious youth and the newly completed radiance of the Sainte Chapelle.

Among his own Florentine contemporaries, Cimabue and Giotto were a little older—Boccaccio, Villani, and Petrarch a little younger. As a boy, Dante seems to have been rather a favorite protegé of the learned Brunetto Latini; and since his family was only distantly noble and not conspicuously wealthy, this intimacy and the subsequent one with the young Prince Carlo Martello have been cited to show that he was already proving himself a youth of "parts." But about his actual schooling in those early years we know practically nothing. It is evident from references throughout his works and from his later civic activities, that Dante had—like so many sons of the renaissance—considerable knowledge of design and architecture. And the author of the Vita Nuova was emphatically not ignorant of the Seven Liberal Arts. But through that whole early work the young scholar is carefully obscured by the young lover. So is the young soldier, although we know that Dante saw active military service and probably fought at the battle of Compaldino. But he was writing subjectively, impressionistically even—and only of the things which mattered vitally in the development of his love life. The first glimpse of little Beatrice Portinari in her dress of "subdued and goodly crimson" mattered overwhelmingly; so did the year 1290 when "the Lord God of justice called that most gracious lady to Himself." Yet Dante never thought it worth while to mention her marriage to Simone Bardi, nor his own subsequent espousal of Gemma Donati. And probably, in the spacious perspective of the soul and the centuries, he was quite right.

However intensive his self-teaching, Dante could scarcely have become one of the greatest scholars of his scholarly age without study at some of the great contemporary universities. So, as we know he did attend both Paris and Bologna, it seems likely that his

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

first sojourns there may have been after Beatrice's death; when, as the Convito tells us, he turned for consolation to wisdom, seeking her "in the schools of men of religion and at the discussions of philosophers" —before the political activities which date from about his own thirtieth year.

Young Alighieri's love for Florence was an intense and impassioned thing, like his love for justice: indeed, like all his loves and hates. As soon as his voice began to be heard in the councils of the city, it was raised invariably and fearlessly against the outside interference and outside levies which, under whatever provocation, ended always in the bloodshed so common in mediaeval communities or the graft so common in our own. It was a curious irony that he should have been elected to the office of prior in that very year 1300 when Pope Boniface VIII, at the instance of the Black faction of Florentines, once again tried the experiment of asking a French prince to intervene as peacemaker. This time it was Charles of Valois, whom Dante bitterly opposed —but history repeated itself. And as the earlier French invasion had spelled the prosperity of his childhood, so this latter spelled the temporal ruin of his maturity: his disgusted veering away from the Guelf and toward the Ghibeline party, his lifelong enmity against Boniface and all papal activity in politics, and immediate exile from his native city. It seems to have been in 1302 or 1303 that Dante turned his face from Florence, never to return. For to the original sentence of banishment with confiscation of his goods, a decree of death was later added.

Then for twenty years he was to learn "how salt his food who fares upon another's bread—how steep his path who treadeth up and down another's stairs." He studied prodigiously, probably at Bologna and Paris again, possibly even further north; and Scartazzini's supposition that he also taught at these and other schools seems most credible. The disenchanted exile had only learning to commend him at Lucca, or at Can Grande's court in Verona; or at Ravenna, where he died shortly after completing a diplomatic mission for Guido da Polenta in 1321. But what really matters is that these years of wandering and heartache bore fruit in one of the greatest masterpieces in all literature—the Comedy which men have agreed to call Divine.

Its inspiration had, of course, come long before: for if Dante's wisdom were indeed the "child of suffering," his beauty was the "child of love." All the world of romance knows the story—for he has told it in that curious rhapsody, the Vita Nuova, of how love came to him in the person of the Florentine maiden, Beatrice Portinari. Everything about her took on immense and occult meaning, everything gave subject for sonnet or canzone. She was exquisite, she was unattainable, she came in vision and all untimely "hid her face amid a crowd of stars." And it might have been just like a thousand other romances in the chivalric convention—except that this happened to be a great and not a little passion. "When she appeared in any place, it seemed to me . . . there was no man mine enemy any longer," wrote the proud, tempestuous youth; "and such warmth of charity came upon me that most certainly in that moment I would have pardoned whosoever had done me an injury."

But neither his own transcendentalism nor the trappings of romance can disguise how unsatisfactory he must have seemed to the lady herself, in his dizzy, inarticulate adoration—or, worse still, in the mad ingenuity of choosing another lady for "screen" and addressing verses to her! The most human thing Dante ever tells us of Beatrice—more human even than the tears shed for her father's death—was her refusal to greet him when gossip of that little vicarious flirtation was particularly rife. But he only wondered, and went home, crushed, to write more verses about it all. At last even he saw the folly of these concealments, and in spite of the popular convention of secrecy, openly proclaimed his devotion, so that because of his songs and of her own exceeding loveliness Beatrice became the legend of Florence: "When she passed anywhere folk ran to behold her. . . . She went along crowned and clothed with humility, showing no whit of pride in all that she heard and saw; and when she had gone by, it was said of many, 'This is not a woman, but one of the beautiful angels of heaven.'" Already she embodied all the virtues he himself needed most—meekness, magnaminity, that "peace" which he calls elsewhere the "crown of every good." And when, musing one day "how frail a thing life is though health keep with it," he is rapt into sudden prophetic vision of her own leavetaking, his prayer to death is simply: "Now come unto me, and be not bitter against me any longer; surely there, where thou hast been, thou hast learned gentleness." But it was only to Beatrice that death came in the June of 1290, leaving Florence "widowed and desolate" like Jerusalem of old. For a while Dante continued to pour his immense grief into the mold of his little verses, driving himself to illness and naturally attracting a good deal of feminine sympathy.

It matters little enough now whether the "Lady of the Window" was (as he implies in the Vita Nuova) a very human person of whom he thought temporarily "as of one too dear," or (as he liked to believe in the later Convito) a symbol of philosophy. Life, to the mystical temperament, has always the dual meaning which he so constantly claims for his own words—real and allegorical. And when he faces Beatrice at the close of the Purgatorio, he confesses candidly enough that there had been détours of sense and imagination, too—treacheries for which he paid in bitter self-reproach. Perhaps even these were necessary, that he might learn for all time how dear was the ideal he had momentarily betrayed. But death lifted that fragile, unfulfilled romance up into immortality, and in the mysterious nearness of eternity Beatrice was to possess him beyond shadow of change or misunderstand-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing. Incentive and inspiration too, little by little the "Lady of his delight" was transmuted into a symbol of all truth, all grace, all wisdom, the very sum of God's revelation to man. It was a milestone not only in Dante's life but in the history of romantic love when that "wonderful vision" came which determined him to "say nothing further of that most blessed one" until he should be able to put into words "what hath not before been written of any woman." So the end of the Vita Nuova became the prelude of the Divine Comedy.

While many of the Dante legends, like many of the Dante letters are, of course, dubious, it is quite possible from his own and contemporary words to conjure up a picture of this apocalyptic figure: the young, eager boy, alternately studying, fighting, and writing mystical love poems—the man devoted to learning and civic righteousness, embittered by the injustice which drove him into exile—the proud, wandering scholar, a bowed figure, courteous yet "melancholy and thoughtful," as Boccaccio tells us, loving to live "apart from mankind, that his meditations might not be interrupted"—until in his fifty-seventh year death found him, far from Florence, his "mother of little love." How important Dante had become almost immediately after his death Villani shows by the space devoted to him in his history of the city; adding that because of his learning (but we could divine other reasons!) he was "somewhat arrogant, fastidious, and disdainful."

Finally, Dante's own minor works complete the many-sided personality. Along with the Vita Nuova one remembers those early lyrics in the "dolce stil' nuova" which would have ranked Dante high as a love poet if he had not himself superseded them. Very revealing, too, is the unfinished Convito or Banquet, in which he attempts to break the bread of knowledge to those who hunger. The book, probably begun in Florence and continued in exile, is a series of poems with long accompanying glosses on all sorts of subjects. Autobiography is touched upon, so are love and learning and the Nine Angelic Choirs. Its observations upon the vernacular—a subject naturally dear to Dante, since he was the first great poet daring enough to confide a masterpiece to it—anticipate his Latin treatise, De Vulgari Eloquentia. And its glorification of the Roman empire anticipates that most curious and intellectually obsolete of all his works, De Monarchia. It is easy enough for the modern mind to see in the "holy" mediaeval empire a mere survival of the antique order, bound to disintegrate before the developing nationalities of Christendom. But to contemporary imaginations this idea of a peaceful, universal dominion may well have loomed as some such panacea as the League of Nations seemed after our recent war. Dante apotheosized it as a haven of harmony in which man might be free to seek learning and God—image of the undivided monarchy of heaven—a government divinely established in the secular order as the Church was in the spiritual. His work, with its sometimes fanatical fulminations against any Pope who ventured to regulate or dictate to this empire, is sheer political propaganda, written in good faith but in the heat of party prejudice. Yet in a poet bruised and weary from the warring of faction against faction, city against city, it is at least a comprehensible reaction.

The two things dearest to Dante on the human side —Beatrice and Florence—life took from him before he was thirty-eight years old; giving in their place "'heart's hunger and soul's thirst and blessedness beyond the pride of kings." It was the blessedness of creating a poem which should so perfectly concentrate all the knowledge and inspiration of his own age that it must forever teach and inspire the ages to follow. Obviously he could never have done this without the treasures of creative genius, profound learning, and rich if searing experience. Without his disillusion, his hatred of injustice, he could never have conceived the Inferno; without the falls and risings of his own Via Crucis he could not have dramatized the Purgatorio; without his yearning love for the Supreme Good, and for the human image of it he had found in one woman, he could scarcely have pictured that Paradiso which is simply the sublimation of light and love.

When he took for subject that arresting fifth act of man's pilgrimage which is played upon the stage of eternity, Dante faced an audience whom poets and preachers had already made familiar with visions and otherworld voyages, for whom the curtain between material and spiritual things constantly fluttered back and forth. He had the advantage of not having to argue any of his essentials: what he had to do was to build a cathedral where there already existed a wayside shrine! So he placed the Hell in which all his contemporary readers believed just where they believed it to be—in circles narrowing down to the centre of the earth. Concerning its punishments he could give imagination free rein, since the Church had not—either then or since—made any definition about them. He could be as concrete as he liked: and he never hesitated to speak as politician as well as poet or prophet.

But while many of Dante's passionate personalities have grown uninteresting or unintelligible with the centuries, we are as near as he to the "Trimmers"—choosers neither of good nor evil upon earth—whom he assigns to a perpetuity of paltry pains just inside the gate of Hell. "Leave all hope, ye that enter here" is the grim legend of that portal. Very near it, in a merciful "sadness without torment," he places the Heathen and Unbaptized; and from this realm his "beloved father," Virgil, has come to be his guide through the Underworld. The first circle of absolute punishment is that of the Carnal Sinners; where men and women—for there is no "double standard" here—are tossed endlessly upon the winds of passion, and where Dante introduces the exquisite episode of his meeting with Francesca da Rimini. These are but the first of the sinners against continence, the others being the Gluttonous, the Avaricious, and the Wrathful. Be-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

low them looms the dread City of Dis, with the Heretics lying lonely in their burning tombs, and all the circles of increasingly malicious evil: the river of blood choking the Murderers and Tyrants, the pitiful wood of the Self-Destroyers, the rain of fire upon those who had sinned in violence against God or Art (Order) or Nature. For the most part, Dante's allegory is obvious enough, with grotesquerie as well as poetry in the punishments—the Evil Counselors floating like wilful flames, the Sowers of Schism with their own bodies horribly and symbolically rent, the metamorphoses of the Thieves, suggesting Fafner's change into the dragon guarding his own gold. But under whatever allegory, it is distinctly terrible to be able to visualize so many souls—souls of his neighbors and friends as well as his enemies—in unending torment. Justice is a difficult virtue to handle, and Dante as judge alone, without love linking him to "man's unpardonable race," would scarcely have survived the ages. But in Purgatory he was to learn of a soul saved "by one little tear"—in Paradise to hear the warning, "We who see God know not as yet all the elect."

Constantly throughout this pageant of "terror and pity" one is struck by the innate refinement of Dante's thought. It was characteristic that only for the Simonists was his indignation greater than his compassion: to the other tormented souls he brings "not contempt, but sorrow." His momentary curiosity to listen to the wrangling of fiends is rebuked by Virgil as "a vulgar wish"—and, perhaps because he never finds them amusing, he can treat all the intricacies of evil with less than the candid coarseness of our robust and radiant Chaucer.

The atmosphere of Hell is essentially abnormal, but there is a very human touch in the punishment of familiar mortal diseases, without the familiar hope of recovery, meted out to the Falsifiers in Words and Deeds and Things. And persistent among these fallen ones Dante finds the inscrutable wish for remembrance. "So may your memory not fade from human minds" is the lure certain to win an answer from them. Certain, except in that innermost ninth circle where all is frozen, and the Traitors, with faces "made doggish by the cold," have slipped below the final fellowship of human motives. Here, confined in a central well of ice, is Satan the arch-traitor—gigantic, three-headed, with bat-wings keeping the intolerable winds astir. It is by no means a subtle Mephistopheles, for Dante seems to have spent none of his creative genius on this figure of ultimate evil. He was content with the typical fiend of mediaeval art—a fallen, frozen figure, the direct negation of all effective life and light and warmth and love.

On the other hand, there is a curious and comforting mixture of the human and divine in his Mount of Purgatory, where penitent man consorts with sympathetic angels and may still learn from the beauties of nature and of art. It is all familiar ground: for once the Ante-Purgatory is passed—where Negligent Rulers, the Late Repentant and those who die suddenly while Excommunicate must wait before beginning their bitter-sweet ascent—Dante kneels before the angel of the doorway, most palpably representing Confession, and bidden to err "in opening rather than in keeping shut." Within, the first sound he hears is a surging Te Deum Laudamus, for Purgatory is a place of joy and prayer as well as of pain—such joy as the woman has in her travail. Also it is a place of that love which one of the poet's most pregnant passages declares "the seed of every virtue and of every deed deserving punishment." The sins atoned for here are the sad perennial seven of our daily lives—familiar enough in Hell also when unrepented—and sins every one of love defective, excessive or perverted.

First comes the circle of the Proud, consoled by the Angel of Humility as they stagger under their burden of stones. Next above are the blind Envious, learning at last the joy of sharing all good; then the Wrathful, groping their way through deep and bitter fog. In the fourth circle the Slothful are goaded on; in the fifth, the Avaricious and the Prodigal suffer—suggestively enough—for the same offense; and so the tale is told.

Everywhere Dante meets old friends or makes new ones, everywhere the shadow betraying his living body raises eager inquiry. And everywhere the longing for prayers—or for mesages to their beloved left on earth—wins from the souls those confessions of which, in the Inferno, ambition had been the motive. Among the emaciated Gluttonous he encounters the gay companion of his youth, Forese Donati—but most of the young love poets are found in the highest circle of all, where the "last wound" of our sensual nature is purged in flame. Here are Guido Guinicelli and Arnault Daniel, who "weeps and goes a-singing," and even for joy of Dante's converse will not stir beyond the cleansing sea of fire. Presently the Angel of Purity prays Dante himself to plunge into the flames; and he recoils in horror until the faithful Virgil reminds him, " 'Twixt Beatrice and thee is this wall." Then he, too, leaps into the holy fire—and issuing from its purification, finds himself at the entrance of Eden, the Earthly Paradise lost by man's original sin. "Crowned now and mitred" over himself, he must take leave of Virgil, the wise poet chosen to represent human reason; for further initiation will come from Beatrice, his symbol of divine faith or revelation.

She is waiting for him, when the colorful pageant of Faith has passed—precisely the sort of pageant Dante must have seen at many a mediaeval festa, only sublimated to the nth degree—and at the very threshold of Paradise he falls weak beneath the "mighty power of ancient love." He is weaker still when her rebuke brings the shamed confession of ancient infidelity—until pitiful angel-hands plunge him into the waters of Lethe. But it is not enough that the evil of life be forgotten—its good must be recalled. So the Purgatorio ends as he is bathed yet again in the sister-stream

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Eunoë: then, with Beatrice for guide, he stands ready to climb the ladder of stars into Paradise.

One reason for Dante's consummate success throughout this supreme work is his balance of novelty and familiarity, of imagination and intellect; and nowhere is this balance more rigorously maintained than in the Paradiso. Scaling with sure step the peaks of sublimity he does not forget that the purpose of the Comedy, as declared in his letter to Can Grande, is ethical rather than speculative. And just as his moral teaching avoids the noble but morbid reactions of untempered asceticism, so his devotion avoids, or rather controls, the excesses of untempered rapture. It is perhaps the crucial test of his integrity in art and life, too, that he is more intent upon the truth as he conceives it than even upon the inebriating beauty of his subject.

Doctrinally, of course, he builds upon the Scriptures and the Summa—as setting he uses the admirably allegorical Ptolemaic system of astronomy. In his first initiation into the paradisal vision, the souls are symbolically manifested in the "many mansions" of their Father's House—the ascent from circle to circle being revealed by the increasing beauty of Beatrice's face. In the Heaven of the Moon are the happy souls whose earthly stain was inconstancy—particularly to a solemn vow: but questioning whether this lower state of blessedness brings any lessening of joy, Dante receives the immortal answer, "E la sua voluntate e nostra pace." That is the first and the last lesson Paradise has to teach—"In His will is our peace." He finds it again in the Heaven of the Moon, which harbors those souls in whom human love too ardently contended with Love Divine: yet "Here we not repent but smile," for God is the eternal Lover and Artist, too, joying in each completed phase of His work. In the Heaven of the Prudent the singing, circling suns pause a moment while Thomas Aquinas rehearses the story of the Poverello —then, with reciprocal courtesy, Bonaventura comes to praise Dominic. In Mars of the Courageous, Dante confronts his ancestor Cacciaguido, who foretells his banishment and bids him never to conciliate men by tempering the truth of his vision. As celestial gravitation draws them upward, Dante is instructed by Beatrice and other saints upon difficult questions of faith, yet he is warned of truths that are not wholly to be compassed save by those whose wit is "matured within love's flame."

Individuality, personality even, is never lost: but definite and dazzling as the poet's imagery is, he lets us understand that reality still escapes. In the Seventh Heaven, Beatrice does not smile nor the Blessed any longer sing lest Dante be shattered by excess of joy. More and more, as they pass the realm of the Fixed Stars, through the Primum Mobile and into the divine quiet of the Empyrean, the spectral colors are focused into one blaze of perfect light. Even Beatrice must leave him at last, returning to the mystical, luminous rose whose petals are the thrones of the saints. Only Mary, joy of the angels, her face "most likened unto Christ's," may obtain for him the Beatific Vision of God. It is granted. With sight miraculously unconsumed, Dante reads: "In one volume clasped of love, whate'er the universe enfolds," while by sublime intuition he apprehends the mysteries of the Trinity and the Divine and Human Nature. But from this ultimate revelation he comes stunned and silent, like every other authentic seer. Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man. Only he knows that peace has come at last, and henceforth his will must roll around like a mighty wheel, "By the love impelled that moves the sun in heaven and all the stars."

Writing in the "vulgar" tongue and choosing the familiar title of "Comedy," Dante seems to have set out deliberately to popularize the teaching of saint and philospher and his own great dream. Yet no one could pretend that it is or ever was easy reading. Indeed, so profound are its disquisitions that in any language less incorrigibly musical than the Italian they could scarcely be claimed as poetry at all. His faith was highly intelligent, even highly intellectualized. There was hardly a doctrine of Catholic Christianity as defined in his day which Dante did not embody in his work: God the First Cause and Final End of Creation—our Redemption by Christ and its necessity—Free Will, Sin, and because of God's justice, Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven—the Church, with Prayer and Sacraments—Mary's power and loveliness. All these are the commonplaces (only never commonplace!) of his thought; so that Pope Benedict XV, magnanimously passing over Dante's personal animosity toward earlier prelates, could declare his work the very "juice of Christian philosophy and theology."

But being a poet, and holding fast to what Patmore called the vital and mystical "corollaries of belief," Dante bequeathed us, not a catechism, but a work of art. And, who, in all the ages, has been more perfectly equipped to write the romance of the human soul in all the changes of the purgative, the unitive, and the illuminative ways? For Dante loved the beauty of holiness, and knew the price which in our bruised world must be paid for all beauty. Like our own contemporary Paul Claudel, the mediaeval Florentine had learned to fathom and to face a universe in which "love has ended in pain, but pain has ended in love."

I Know a Lady

I know a lady very, very old,
Who is more beautiful than youth may be;
For youth is like new books that gleam with gold
And colors traced on white leaves brilliantly;
But she is frail as is some antique book
Whose thin, browned pages reverently we touch,
As breathing forth the fragrance of long years
And ancient wisdom. Quiet is her look,
Like the dull reds and deepened blues and such
Quaint, twisted letters as preserve the thoughts of seers.

IRENE H. WILSON.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE SYMBOL OF THE DANTE AWARD

By GEORGE N. SHUSTER

IT IS, perhaps, the most striking intellectual characteristic of our age that so many "defenders of the occident" have appeared. Their business is not so much to oppose one or the other force which has attacked western culture from the outside—Buddhistic mystical cults or imperialistic absorption in technical progress, for example—as to fortify it against dissolution from within. Whatever the name of the defender—Chesterton, Barrès, Massis, Theodor Haecker—his concern is always with the preservation of a certain form that is constantly threatened by the derangement of the materials which have been so delicately and patiently organized by that form. Obviously, for instance, the conduct of mathematical inquiry has had an incalculable effect upon the making of Europe. To it we owe the vast architectural and mechanical syntheses which even now are termed "wonders" of the world, as well as habits of thought so soundly established that they are unconscious no less than representative of the race. But released from its place in the unity of civilization, this mathematical inquiry has led steadily to the formation of a philosophy which, through Spinoza and Kant, attempted nothing else than a "Copernican overthrow" of the European mind. Thus an element which had gone into the making of occidental culture threatened the dissolution of that culture; and many similar examples might be introduced.

Significantly enough, the defenders are for the most part Catholics—and converts. Yet there are many who, without coming to the conclusion that the religion of the Popes is verily the matrix in which the life of the West was formed, agree with Paul Valéry that "Christianity proposes the subtlest, the most important, and even the most fertile problems to the mind." To all, I suppose, three syntheses stand out as most expressive of the wholly unparalleled unification of European life—as the greatest exemplars of what must be defended: the cathedral of Chartres, the philosophy of Saint Thomas, the poetry of Dante. And if we accept Dante as the most important of the three, adopting now a frankly human point of view, we shall probably be right, for the reason that his towering achievement adds poetry to the symbolism of the cathedral and to an ably, if not completely, digested philosophy. It is as impossible to avoid Dante if one talks of the "western mind" as it would be to miss the Himalayas in northern India. He is the mountain scenery of thirteen crowded, formative centuries.

The donor of the Dante Prize Award joined with the editors of The Commonweal in believing that many Americans are actively interested in Dante, and that this existing though not organized community of interest ought to be welded together and welded by some public effort. No one knew, of course, whether the offer of a prize would have the desired effect; and there existed the fear that it would merely encourage professional "literary competers" to thumb a few manuals on the subject in the hope of arriving at glory and gain. But in due time the manuscripts, very like a deluge, made their descent; and it was seen that though some few were expectantly holding out a more or less poorly disguised bait, we had reached several hundreds of genuine Dante readers. There were authors who had gained a foothold among reputable scholars; there were young people who combined a fresh vigor with a culture that speaks well for their alma maters.

It was really a most absorbing collection of manuscripts. The labor involved in dealing with them, of organizing that inevitable sifting process which must antedate the award of a prize, can by no means be termed the burden of half a day. Nevertheless, it brought its own refreshment—contact with work seriously done; with minds who were not merely toying with a "chance." Many papers developed details of Dantean research, set forth theses involving history or interpretation, in a manner too erudite to satisfy the requirements upon which the contest was based. Could we properly acclaim a treatment of the influence of Statius upon the Divine Comedy, or a summary of arguments designed to show that Dante's astronomy was more modern than has usually been assumed? No. We set out to look for a paper having "literary merit" and "an interpretative rather than philological or research character," and we had to hew to our line. Nevertheless, the real value of the contest lies to a great extent in the manuscripts we were forced to rule out. These indicate to what dimensions scholarly investigation of Dante's work has grown during recent years, and they establish a point which need not be lost sight of—that the Divine Comedy cannot be gulped down like ginger beer or absorbed as one drinks in sea air, but that it is something one adds to one's spiritual stature through an exercise as difficult in its own way as the struggle of a weakling for athletic strength.

The mere fact that Dantean literature is a kind of storehouse into which all the materials (even some dark and not easily malleable materials) of the western world have gone, is what makes a brief, pertinent summary of it so difficult. And yet such a summary is badly needed. It alone can place the figure of the poet on such a pedestal as the average vision can take in familiarly, with an effort not too exhausting; and it alone can enkindle that enthusiasm which may carry uninitiated readers over the barriers in the way. Many papers submitted for the competition attempted precisely this. It was the business of the jury to decide which of these succeeded best, which method of ap-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

proach had led to the most fruitful results. On behalf of the jury let us say that perhaps no more notable group of men who combine scholarship with literary practice has ever been assembled in America for one purpose. To their readiness to accept an exacting duty and their discernment, the progress of our effort is deeply indebted. Perhaps one should say that no unanimity of opinion prevailed. At least half a dozen papers found enthusiastic recognition on the part of some one arbiter. This fact should come home pleasantly to those whose efforts seem, inevitably, to have met with no acceptance.

A more detailed statement of the data accumulated during the contest may prove interesting. About three hundred manuscripts were received, only a few of which ran beyond the number of words allowed. The authors hailed from all parts of the world—England, Ireland, France, Italy, Australia, New Zealand, and some thirty states of the Union being represented. In some cases, writers established the authority with which they spoke by accompanying their manuscripts with published volumes on Dantean subjects. The nine papers finally selected as most suitable were ranked by the jury as follows:

First: Dante and His Vision of Life, by Katherine Brégy, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Second: Dante, the Central Man of All the World, by Herbert H. Yeames, Hobart College.

Third: Dante's Divine Comedy and Its Appeal to the Modern Age, by Albert R. Bandini, Stockton, California.

Fourth: For the Better Understanding of Dante, by Reverend Francis Lucidi, Catholic University of America.

Fifth: Beatrice and Dante, by Roderick Marshall, Leonia, New Jersey.

Sixth: Dante and the She-Wolf, by Alfonso de Salvio, Evanston, Illinois.

Seventh: Dante and the Twentieth Century, by Monsignor John T. Slattery, Albany, New York.

Eighth: On Dante's Doctrine of Relations Between Soul and Body, by L. Guiffré, University of Palermo.

Ninth: Dante's Guides, by Madame Sarah Brownson, Manhattanville, New York.

The jury was composed of the following: Dr. Dino Bigongiari (chairman) professor in the department of Romance languages, Columbia University; Dr. C. A. Dinsmore, lecturer in the Yale Divinity School; Dr. John H. Finley, editor of the New York Times; Dr. Charles Hall Grandgent, chairman of the Romance department, Harvard University; Reverend T. Lawrason Riggs, chaplain of the Catholic Club, Yale University; Reverend Thomas M. Schwertner, O.P., Dominican editor and scholar; Dr. Joel E. Spingarn, editor and one of the deans of American criticism; Reverend M. I. Stritch, S.J., professor of philosophy, St. Louis University; Dr. Henry Osborn Taylor, author of The Mediaeval Mind; Dr. James J. Walsh, president of the Dante League of America, and noted lecturer. The approval of a group of men so distinguished individually certainly ought to mean general public endorsement and recognition.

Is not another, more subtle form of recognition involved in the matter? It seems to us that the generosity of Mr. John S. Leahy has sponsored an unusually significant work on behalf of the common welfare. When a benefaction of this sort takes the form of a monument or a flag-pole, it is, of course, more easily seen. But whatever may be the value of symbols like these, the fact remains that civilization today is largely the product of literature and scholarship. We no longer really teach through carved images or figurative towers. We even approach art through the medium of what we have read about it. "Mind in the making" is a substance kneaded by literature, journalism, and research. Though these facts are obvious to anybody who opens his eyes, it remains true that precisely those who should "defend the occident" in this country seem indifferent to them. Much can be said for individuals, for intelligent units, scattered here and there; but the drift of American letters and scholarship can be estimated pretty fairly if one merely observes the impact of accumulated modernisms upon the churches. Any lover of tradition, anyone convinced of the transcendent value of the western mind, has, regardless of his deep affection for native American experience and mentality, no other recourse than to borrow from Europe the materials of defense.

Isolated though it be and perhaps relatively small, the Dante Prize Award is therefore a salutary example of what must be done on a far larger scale if thought upholding the long career of western men is to be developed effectively. Obscurity, indigence, isolation—these are walls over which no individual can climb and which will stifle even communities in their ominous shadow. Dante happens to be a dual proof of why those walls must come down. In the first instance, the fact that so many persons are competently interested in him proves, the aloofness of the majority notwithstanding, that the "forces of defense" we so earnestly need exist in some measure. That these should be encouraged, no matter how many more immediately urgent needs may seem to stand in the way, needs emphasis rather than formal demonstration. In the second place, Dante is after all merely a sample of the riches—doctrinal, thoughtful, cultural—accumulated by Christian Europe. We need as much of it as we can get and assimilate. This was understood very well by a long array of illustrious Americans, who went from the study and translation of the Divina Commedia toward as sympathetic and fulsome a commerce with western civilization as their time and circumstances would permit. Our age, despite its earmarks of frivolity and indolence, is perhaps at heart more earnest than the era preceding it was. But we have not yet sat down to talk to it competently, under the magnificent arches of our inheritance.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CONDUCT AND THE COSMOS

By JOHN A. RYAN

FROM the title one might infer that Dr. Leighton's book* is a treatise on sociology. However, it deals entirely with social ethics. It was written, the preface informs us, in the conviction "that Plato and Aristotle were right in their emphasis on the intimate interdependence of ethics and social philosophy"; and it is the dependence of the former upon the latter which seems, in the author's opinion, to be the more important aspect of this mutual relation.

As a background for his discussion of ethical and social problems, Dr. Leighton presents several chapters on the rise of these problems, the history of ethical thought and the psychological basis of ethics. Then follow seven chapters on ethical principles. Part V deals with applied ethics or social philosophy.

In many of his fundamental positions and in most of his particular applications of ethical principles, the author is in substantial agreement with the Catholic position. He defends the proposition that ethics is a normative science, not a mere positive or descriptive science. It deals with "'norms or standards of valuation for human conduct"; with the "intrinsic values or goods of life"; with the things which are "worth while for their own sakes." In his chapter on the Ethical Meaning of Freedom, he has an excellent defense of free will. If we deny free will, he says, "it is silly to talk of moral responsibility."

On three fundamental questions, however, he departs from the Catholic position. Concerning the scope of ethics, he objects to the "extension of the idea of morality to cover the whole field of human conduct." An act is good or bad according as it conforms "with some rule or principle of conduct which prescribes what is good or bad for the members of the community. . . . The theory of morals has to do primarily with the formulation of principles of conduct that should govern social relations," and has to do with private conduct only in so far as it "may trench upon social conduct." He declares, indeed, that one has duties to oneself and that self-control and fortitude are moral virtues; but they have significance only because they have "a social reference." There is no area of individual good which is without this relation.

One can grant, in reply, that the individual virtues have social relations and that they come to "full fruition only in a favorable community life." Not every exercise of them, however, has social aspects. Not every violation of them affects the neighbor directly. A man may get drunk and, as a result of that condition, commit physical assault. This particular violation of the virtue of temperance does, indeed, have a "social reference," but its individual character comes first. Before the man injured his neighbor, he had injured his own nature by subordinating the higher to the lower. Under its individual aspect drunkenness is morally wrong, whether or not it issues in any social wrong; and this moral element is important in itself and for its own sake. To assume that, because the individual reaches normal development only in society, therefore the ethical aspect of every one of his actions is social only, and has no importance in relation to the individual himself, is not only illogical but contrary to obvious and abundant experience.

In close relation to the author's undue minimizing of duties to self, stands his entire omission of duties to God. Indeed, he does not believe in a personal God Who has authority to impose moral obligation. His idea of a Supreme Being or force in the universe is thus expressed: "a Cosmic Order, not ourselves, but of which we ourselves are offspring, that makes for personality. . . . There is an enduring Cosmetic Order of which we ourselves are members, but which is very much greater than humanity." He believes that the idea of God is useful, but mainly as a symbol: "God is the fittest symbol for faith in a Cosmic Life which is the source or stream of tendency in the spiritual progress of the individual and of humanity." Obviously, no very compelling obligation could be accepted or defended by one whose belief in God is of this vague character.

The author's second divergence from the Catholic position, his concept of the norm of morality, follows from his inadequate concept of the field of ethics. Throughout the book one finds many references to the "moral standard," but the following seems to be the nearest thing to a definite formulation: "Any activity is good which yields lasting satisfaction to the interests of the self in the direction which makes for the maximum harmonious energizing of his capacity as a member of the community of persons." How much clearer is the statement found in the ordinary Catholic manual of ethics: an act is good which conforms with rational nature adequately considered; that is, in its constitution and its essential relations. From this formula we deduce the principle that man has a higher and a lower nature, and that the latter must always be subordinated to the former; that man is related to God as creature to Creator, and that there are particular obligations which this relation necessarily imposes; that man is related to non-rational creatures as end to means, and may treat them accordingly; and, finally, that he is related to his fellow-men as equals who, like himself, possess intrinsic worth, whence follow the duties of charity and justice and all the other

*_The Individual and the Social Order: An Introduction to Ethics and Social Philosophy, by Joseph A. Leighton. New York: D. Appleton and Company. $3.50._

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

social obligations. This formulation of the moral standard exhibits the fields of ethics as being threefold, comprising duties to oneself, to God, and to the neighbor.

It must not be inferred, however, that, like many other writers who conceive ethics as entirely social, the author subordinates the individual to society. He does nothing of the sort as may be clearly inferred in the following sentences: "The ethical personality transcends the social order. . . . The destiny of the individual seems to rise beyond any actual social order. . . . There is something sacred and eternal in human personality."

His third departure from the Catholic position is in relation to the ultimate sanction of morality. "Why should one seek good rather than evil?" Answering this question, he rejects the sanction of future rewards and punishments as "degrading." He represents this sanction as "balancing the pain of foregoing for a short time sensuous delight in order to ensure an infinity of future delight of the same kind." This is a caricature, unless the author has in mind the conception of eternal happiness which prevails among Mohammedans. Moreover, it misrepresents the theistic and the Christian positions even more seriously. The primary end of conduct is to give glory to God in the way that God has ordained; personal happiness is only a secondary and necessarily resulting condition. Dr. Leighton goes on to declare that no external sanction for good conduct is needed: "The highest sanction of the good life is reverence and love for the attainment and enjoyment of the fullest possible moral and spiritual individuality in others and in oneself." Nevertheless, he has some doubt, not merely of the efficacy, but of the objectivity of this sanction; apparently he is content "to assume as a working faith that in realizing and furthering the realization of integrated and intelligent individuality, we are rowing with and in the main stream of the Cosmic Life." Even if one assumes that the "Cosmic Life" and "Cosmic Order" are realities, how can one be reasonably required to attribute to these entities a right to impose genuine moral obligation? Suppose one prefers sensual delights taken here and now, and in general an ignoble kind of life; how can it be shown that one is acting irrationally? Moral obligation has no absolute force, unless it proceeds from a will which has the right to command. This is the final flaw of every theory of morality, regardless of how noble its prescriptions may be, which tries to dispense with a Supreme Will having absolute validity.

Despite these defects in method and in fundamental principles, the author's treatment of general ethics is, in the main, much more sound than are the great majority of present-day works on the subject. When he comes to discuss applied ethics he is very close, indeed, to the Catholic position in most of his judgments. There is very little to which we could make strong objection. We find excellent chapters on justice, political authority, economic distribution, socialism, and democracy. The three chapters on Christian ethics in the historical section are all good, particularly the one entitled The Ethics of Scholasticism. Nevertheless, we regret to note the paucity of Catholic works in the author's references. In the lists after Part IV we find only three names: Montalembert, Rickaby, and Cronin; in the lists covering Part V (Applied Ethics) there is only one. There is no Catholic name among the author's references in connection with chapters on socialism and political authority, or in the catalogue of General Works on Ethics at the end of the volume. Possibly if he were better acquainted with Catholic authors, Dr. Leighton's ethical theory would have a sounder basis and would exhibit greater coherence, cogency, and certitude. This supposition does not seem far fetched when we read the eloquent and sympathetic summary at the end of his chapter on the ethics of scholasticism. That summary covers four pages and the following is part of the final paragraph:

> Thus the dominating principle of the Christian thought and practice of the middle-ages was teleological and ethical. . . . This was a magnificent ideal which probably more completely penetrated and controlled western civilization in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries than ever since then. In it all interests, activities and things were pressed into the service of the good life. If it be ascetic, monastic, otherworldly, it is with a great end in view. It is motiviated by a more exalted conception of the dignity and destiny of man than any naturalistic modern humanism. It makes man only "a little lower than the angels to crown him with glory and worship." If it be an aristocratic ideal, it is such only in the true sense that distinctions of moral and spiritual quality are the only distinctions than have inexpugnable value. The cosmological framework of the classical Christian ethic and metaphysic has been shattered. But can western culture afford to dispense with its spiritual core—the faith that man is, in part, a self-determining, responsible super-physical being? The only logical alternative is that man is nothing but a chance and transient assemblage of physical particles and that all virtues, vices, ideals, values, choices and resolves, are but chemical ferments.

The saddest thing about Dr. Leighton's book is that his own substitute for "the classical Christian ethic and metaphysic" is not likely to impress the average man as having any greater authority than the ethics of materialism which the author detests and fears.

Dancer

Although she had not danced for years,
Her plodding feet had not
Forgotten steps that had been theirs,
But her poor heart forgot
To leap, with an exulting song,
Beneath excitement's spur. . . .
She was not dancing in that throng,
But a thin ghost of her!

JOHN HANLON.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE SINCLAIR LEWIS INDUSTRY

By MICHAEL WILLIAMS

THE making, the advertising, the marketing of Sinclair Lewis novels have become one of the great industries, almost to be compared with Ford cars, Camel cigarettes, the movies, radio, or Aimée McPherson crusades. Long before the appearance of the latest brand—Elmer Gantry—the "sales quota" forces of the industry began their far-flung campaign. The Associated Press and other news agencies distributed "news stories"—"legitimate" news stories—concerning Mr. Sinclair Lewis, in connection with his preparatory work on his forthcoming novel. "Sinclair Lewis Preaches in Kansas City Church"; "Sinclair Lewis Attends Y. M. C. A. Meeting"; "Sinclair Lewis Addresses Conference of Methodist-Baptist Clergymen"; and then, "Sinclair Lewis Dares God to Strike Him Dead." Meanwhile, book-news pages, literary departments in scores of city and small-town journals, columnists and recorders of literary gossip, kept the publicity pots boiling with innumerable items.

For more than a year, through all the arts of publicity, the fact that the author of Main Street, Babbitt, and Arrowsmith was writing, or, rather making, a novel that was to "deal with preachers" was spread throughout the land. As the "publication date" approached, the campaign waxed more insistent. In support of the barrage of publicity, the heavier guns of large-space advertising were wheeled into position. In order that the impact of the terrific nature of Elmer Gantry should not be lessened by premature disclosures, a certain date was solemnly proclaimed by the industry for the "release" by the press of reviews or synopses of the contents of the book; which date was with equal solemnity accepted by the press, as if it were a case of the issuance of a President's message, or of a decision of the Supreme Court affecting stock-market values. One eager but indiscreet newspaper dared to violate the edict by printing a synopsis of the story of Elmer Gantry; but the eagle eye of some generalissimo of the industry promptly detected the breach of discipline, a telephone wire sizzled with rebuke and command, and the newspaper in question obediently yanked the offending article out of its first edition, and fell back into line through the rest of its editions of that day, humbly waiting till the "release date" became effective.

When it did—what a flood of publicity poured forth! Has the world of literature ever witnessed anything even remotely similar? Ordinarily, and even in the case of books of real importance written by authors almost as celebrated as Mr. Lewis, reviews will appear at any time after their publication up to several months thereafter. But in the case of Elmer Gantry, hardly a literary journal, or literary department of a newspaper (at least, so far as New York is concerned, and I suppose the same thing was true elsewhere) failed to publish a long review coincidentally with or immediately subsequent to the coming of the eagerly awaited "release" date. Which meant that critics of such high standing as, for example, Carl Van Doren, Harry Hansen, Elmer Davis, Rebecca West, Robert Littell, J. W. Krutch, and others, had read (and more or less had marked, learned, and inwardly digested) Elmer Gantry, and had turned in their copy all ready for the issuance of the edict of "release," long before that date arrived.

Strange phenomenon of "regimentation," of "standardization," of "business psychology," of "mass production"—in a word, of Main Street and of Babbittry! An author who, after many years of writing commercial fiction for Main Street magazines, from the New Thought organ, The Nautilus, to the Saturday Evening Post, suddenly emerges from the ruck of hack writers as one of the most considerable of the serious novelists of today with his vitriolic exposures of all the hypnotisms and mob-mindedness of the age in America, and then becomes himself, through the action of the very social forces and mechanisms which he has become famous by satirizing, a primary example of those forces!

Well, the same, or much the same thing happened in the case of such men as Edison, a genius of invention; as Henry Ford, a genius in the mechanics of quantity manufacture; as Luther Burbank, a genius in the crossing of plant products for men and beasts; and unquestionably Sinclair Lewis also is a genius. A man who has stamped the thought of his age, and its language, with the ideas that now are connoted by such words as Main Street and Babbitt; a man who has caused millions of other men to become uneasily self-conscious of their own cultural and social limitations and absurdities, indubitably is a genius. That he should be seized upon and exploited by the characteristic exploitation forces of his day, and that, indeed, he should seem to be thoroughly at home in that galley, is after all, no doubt, appropriate and inevitable. But at least one detached observer cannot refrain from lighting a taper before the shrine of the neglected god of irony.

Sinclair Lewis certainly deserves all the success he has won, so far as that success is explicable in terms of personal industry and perseverance. I well remember his advent in Carmel-by-the-Sea, in California, that colony of poets and painters and dramatists and fiction writers (and their hangers-on, and the yearners). Not long out of Yale, and fresh from his unsuccessful effort to keep the Helicon Hall home fires burning by stoking the furnace in Upton Sinclair's "coöperative socialist colony," Lewis had trekked across country to the Pacific

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

from the Atlantic, seeking, as always he sought, contacts with other writers, and also, and much more significantly, seeking contacts with life as life is lived today on the Main Street which he was to discover for America as Columbus discovered America itself. Rarely having money enough to pay for a sleeping-car berth, Lewis sat or lounged for many weary nights in smoking-cars or day-coaches in his slow and tiresome journey. But "tiresome" is not the word. He did it eagerly. Then and there, as elsewhere and always later on, his keen eyes were observing, his curious and retentive memory was recording, everything he saw and heard—everything, that is to say, up to a certain level of perceptiveness, above which neither then nor since was he able to penetrate. That acidulous etching of a day-coach in which Elmer Gantry travels in the fifth chapter of his story, unforgettable in its musty vividness, is not a fictitious picture; Sinclair Lewis has traveled in just that coach; it is a photograph out of his memory, but developed in the acid of a disgusted hatred.

Lewis brought a trunk with him to Carmel despite his difficulties and delays in getting there; or maybe he sent for it afterward; I forget; but anyway, that trunk became locally famous and a thing of wonder to the writers there, most of whom were six-days-a-week loafers, and mere Jock o' Dreams compared with the new arrival. For that trunk was packed with a veritable card-index of a fiction manufacturer; the industry that has now grown to such vast proportions had that battered trunk as its root and origin. There were clippings galore; news stories that might be the source of fiction plots; there were innumerable sketches in words of persons, places, happenings, recorded by Lewis himself. A favorite place for such observations was a stool in a quick-lunch restaurant, in any Main Street, in any town where Lewis chanced to be. There were dozens, scores, hundreds of possible plots for novels, short stories, plays. Once he sat up all night with Jack London in George Sterling's bungalow, going through the plot file. Jack London, at least in his latter days, was not particularly inventive in the matter of plots. Sinclair displayed his samples; scores were examined, ten or fifteen were bought, at, I believe, five or ten dollars per plot. London could write out the ones he used at a profit of a thousand dollars or so; meanwhile, he needed the plots, Lewis needed the quick sales at spot cash; so both were satisfied. Ten or twelve plots no more lowered the general level of plots in that trunk than a cupful or two of water lowers the level of a pond.

Sinclair Lewis, then, as these anecdotes show (and that is the reason for telling them) began as he has developed—namely, as a novelist of the school of Zola or Charles Reade—a novelist of documents, of newspaper clippings, notes, painstaking observations; a novelist of method, a hard-working business novelist. Later on came many other experiences; blurb writing for publishing houses; newspaper reporting (though not very much of that) the writing of boys' books, fiction making for all sorts of magazines. A very practical man indeed, and sensibly so; one who watched his markets, who followed the ups and downs of the writing trade.

But all the time there burned in him that something or other, that dissatisfaction with things as they are, that vague yearning after other and presumably better and higher things which possesses so many millions of Americans. It was the thing that drove him to Helicon Hall, to watch and casually to be part of a decidedly un-Main Street experiment in life; it was the thing that drove him across the country to Carmel-by-the-Sea; the thing that at long last was to become the spirit that lifted and separated the novels of his fame, Main Street, Babbitt, and Arrowsmith, above and apart from the great mass of his manufactured fiction. For these books, like Elmer Gantry, may have been boomed, advertised, pushed, promoted, marketed, like many other Main Street labels, slogans, brands of this-that-and-the-other thing demanded by Main Street, but they certainly were not conceived or executed in that spirit. They were starkly sincere criticisms of those aspects of American life which had rasped and wounded Lewis himself, as they rasp and wound so many of his fellow-citizens. They are the novels, not of an objective, creative artist, but of a subjective victim of Main Street who also had developed by most laborious pains an almost unrivaled technique of observation and of the expression of his observations.

But is Elmer Gantry of the same kind as Main Street, Babbitt, and Arrowsmith? Superficially, it seems to belong to the category of the authentic Lewis novel; but I do not think that it really belongs to it. It has, indeed, many of the same general characteristics. It deals (as it is almost needless to repeat at this rather late day after the release date has flooded the land with accounts of Elmer Gantry) with a Middle-West character, a specialized product of the same life and social conditions that produced George Babbitt and so many other Lewis figures. This time the character is a "Reverend," a clergyman, first of the Baptist persuasion, and then, after hectic interludes of itinerant evangelism and New Thought adventuring, a shining light of small-town Methodism; on his way, as the book ends, to the limelight that beats upon the advertising pulpits of New York itself, and to the presidency of a Society for the Reform of Practically Everything. It contains some of Lewis's best pages of keen description, and of his inimitable mimicry of the weird language and weirder ideas of small-town, Middle-West men and women. But—well, if had it not been Lent when I read the book, I could not possibly have read the book; but since it was Lent, I inflicted upon myself the mortification of going through some four hundred pages of the most wearisome kind it has ever been my lot to endure. Of course, having committed myself to the task of reviewing the book, it was, no doubt, my duty to get through with it, and I suppose

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(but I'm not a theologian) that one can't ask credit for mortifying one's self in the doing of one's duty.

It would seem as if Sinclair Lewis must have collected at least a thousand clippings from the press descriptive of the hundreds of clergymen of all the sects who have "got into trouble with women," as the phrase goes, in one way or another, for many years past, and then distilled from them a concentrated essence of lubricity and lust, of lying, hypocrisy, cruelty, degradation of the deadliest, to inject into the veins of his Elmer Gantry. But as Elmer Gantry from first to last is a stuffed figure, a man of straw—a sort of scarecrow, or Guy Fawkes figure, made only to be hanged as an effigy, or burned, or vicariously tarred and feathered, there is no blood into which to inject the potion, and the endless series of sexual acts and crimes through which Gantry is led becomes simply incredible, and almost incredibly tedious. Equally incredible is Gantry's immunity from public exposure. He is exactly the sort of poor fool whose follies supplied all the newspaper clippings amassed by his biographer. His triumphant avoidance of exposure in his countless escapades robs his creator (if that word may be used of the maker of such a sapless puppet) of all claim to being a realist; on the contrary, this particular rake's progress is a nightmare of naïve romanticism.

Finding Elmer Gantry itself such difficult reading, finding in it little or nothing of that underlying, central spirit of authentic interest in his subject, of the understanding of his material, which gave fire and force to Babbitt, for example, I lightened the burden of reading it by the perusal of many of the criticisms of the novel. And these criticisms are almost as important as the book itself, because they are proofs of the character of that importance. They testify, in one way or another, to the fact that Elmer Gantry is a part of a very strong social movement now under way in this country, a movement of more fundamental significance than that other movement, or mood, of uneasy self-consciousness of wide-spread habits of national crudities and uglinesses made manifest by Lewis in Main Street and Babbitt. For Elmer Gantry is journalism; it is muck-raking journalism put into the form of fiction, and it now seeks to make articulate and to increase the growing resentment which great numbers of people in all parts of the country are feeling against what they consider the tyrannous encroachments upon the liberties of the citizens by organized religious bodies. Robert Littell in the New Republic admirably exposes the fundamental weaknesses of the book as fiction. He leaves little to be said by any other critic on that score. He even denies to Sinclair Lewis any merit as a propagandist, recognizing him as "simply and solely a witch-burner." Miss Rebecca West goes deeper, however, than does Mr. Littell into the subject of the book's failure as art, or even as the journalism of social criticism. She very keenly, and I think truthfully, demonstrates that Mr. Lewis in this book does not function on the intellectual level of his theme, which, after all, is religion. He nowhere shows that he has any understanding of what organized religion, even in its grotesque variations and fungoid growths, means.

That there is another side to organized Protestantism than the seamy side represented by Elmer Gantry, Mr. Lewis, indeed, does recognize—but in a perfunctory, listless fashion. A "Father" Pengilly is the "mystic" of the shadowy group of "good" ministers; a wavering silhouette, a mere gesture of half-hearted benevolence. As for the other decent clergymen, they are still more impossible to accept as being real than the ghostlike Pengilly. The authors to whom they turn for their spiritual light and leading, are solemnly listed as being H. G. Wells, Bernard Shaw, H. L. Mencken —and, yes, believe it or not—Sinclair Lewis!

Because, then, the book lacks any semblance of a realistic idea of religion, it is as trivial as any of Elmer Gantry's own sermons. Nevertheless, as another Elmer, this time an Elmer among the critics, Mr. Elmer Davis, in the New York Times, very lucidly points out, it is not only the dedication of Elmer Gantry to Mr. H. L. Mencken, but its expression of Mr. Mencken's ideas in terms which hundreds of thousands of mob-minded readers will swallow whole that gives the book great importance as part of that movement against Christianity of which the Baltimore publicist is the leader.

So far—even when all due respect has been paid to the Ku Klux Klan and similar movements, and to such queer gentry as Senator Heflin—so far, the anti-Christian feeling now rampant in the country is mainly directed against the Methodist and Baptist persuasions, and allied sects, and this because of their organized interference with other people through such things as prohibition, the Anti-Saloon League, their lobbies at Washington, their attempts to control state legislatures, and their various activities along Blue Law Sunday laws and censorship gags. This resentment and opposition becomes daily more deep and powerful; like all things in America, it tends to become organized, and one of these days it will be organized. Christianity, in a word, nowadays tends to get itself judged more by its activities along the lines noted above, than by its better and more beneficial social activities; its charities, its hospitals, its salutary effects in other directions. It is organized, militant, not to say rambunctious, Protestant Christianity rather than Catholicism which supplies the institutions, the habits, the customs, the movements, by which Christianity is being misjudged. There is a lesson in this for Catholics—but this is supposed to be a book review, not a sermon, and I think that Catholics are intelligent enough to see for themselves what the lesson of Elmer Gantry is for them. But, I hasten to assure them, they do not have to undertake the painful task of reading it. They may see its effects without having to read it simply by scanning the mass of editorials, newspaper articles, and reports of angry sermons, which it is eliciting everywhere. Elmer Gantry is a social movement industrialized.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MARYLAND TERCENTENARY

By MARK O. SHRIVER

THE twenty-fifth day of March, 1934, seems rather far in the future in 1927, but seven years pass quickly and a movement is already under way to commemorate fittingly the landing from the Ark and the Dove in St. Mary's County. Just what form the celebration will take has not yet been definitely determined, and it is probable that no decision will be reached until the meeting of the next General Assembly of Maryland in 1929.

With the approval of Governor Ritchie and the endorsement of the Knights of Columbus of Maryland and the Calvert Associates and the Maryland Historical Society, a memorial will be presented to the Assembly now in session at Annapolis, calling attention to the great event of 300 years ago, and petitioning for its recognition in some fitting and proper manner. The memorial will, it is planned, be presented to the House of Delegates by the Honorable Fendall Marbury, a descendant of an old family of southern Maryland; and to the Senate by the Honorable David G. McIntosh who, by virtue of his office as president of the Senate, is the lieutenant-governor of the state. The present plan is to have committees appointed on the part of House and Senate with, possibly, representation on the part of the petitioning organizations, who will serve without pay and who will report a preliminary plan to the session of 1929 when definite action should be taken.

The big impetus in Maryland has come from a committee of the State Council, Knights of Columbus, appointed because of the activities of the Calvert Associates in the spring of 1926 when a large meeting was held in Baltimore, which was addressed by Sir Esme Howard the British Ambassador, Governor Ritchie, Michael Williams, and other distinguished persons.

The memorial which will be presented to the General Assembly is as follows:

"To His Excellency the Governor and the General Assembly of the state of Maryland:—The twenty-fifth day of March, 1934, will mark the three hundredth anniversary of the landing of the Maryland Pilgrims on the shores of St. Mary's County. It is an occasion and a date that should ever be gratefully remembered by all Americans, and one that should ever be held in special veneration by the inhabitants of this state.

"In our early days, before the federal government had been established, certain of the colonies may indeed have enacted iniquitous laws and imposd unjust restrictions, but the United States of America has always been a haven for the oppressed of every race and creed. It was in Maryland that toleration was first established and Church and state made supreme, each in its own sphere. The story is in all history and is cut in the imperishable stone on the base of the statue erected to the memory of Cecilius Calvert which stands in the vestibule of the Baltimore court-house. . . .

"It is proper, therefore, that the Governor and the General Assembly of Maryland should take a leading part with all the people of the state in fitly commemorating this remarkable act in a world and at a time when intolerance was the general rule, and oppression the ordinary habit of men. The undersigned individuals and organizations therefore respectfully petition for such official action as shall properly recognize this anniversary in some acceptable manner thereafter to be determined."

It is considered likely that some ceremony will be held on the shores where Lord Baltimore landed with his colonists, but the principal events of the tercentenary celebration will in all probability be held in the city of Baltimore.

A COMMUNICATION

EXISTING ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES

Jackson, Ohio.

TO the Editor:—Were it not for one implication in Father Maguire's farewell letter, I should be inclined to allow him to retire in peace. He contents himself with a quotation from Pope Leo XIII, which follows in part: "If through necessity . . . the workman accepts harder conditions because [his] employer . . . will give him no better, he is the victim of force and injustice." Father Maguire then goes on to say that I have presented a dilemma, "one conclusion of which is that the employer must be allowed to 'pay a notoriously low wage' contrary to the doctrine of Leo XIII." Now Father Maguire himself admitted that he would permit this condition for a short time and with certain reservations, but the fact remains that he does permit it. This is a tacit admission on his part, that the employer in question will be committing no injustice! There is another point, namely, that he has misrepresented the Holy Father's doctrine. Note the words used in the encyclical—"if the employer will pay no more," which implies freedom of choice on the part of the employer. But there is a vast difference between the meaning of the phrase quoted and that which Father Maguire implies, "whether the employer can or cannot pay more"!

If Father Maguire's interpretation is correct, the employer is guilty of defrauding the laborer of his wages regardless of his inability to pay a higher wage. The absurdity of any such interpretation is more evident when we consider it a little further. Suppose I have two men in my employ, who are being paid the same wage for doing the same work. This wage is a living wage for the first man, who is unmarried and has no dependents; but, in the case of the second man, it is not a living wage because he is married and has a large family to support. However, the wage paid is all that the labor is worth. Under Father Maguire's interpretation of the encyclical, I am bound in conscience to pay the more needy worker more!

One of the curious facts of all living wage controversies is that it seems never to have occurred to the proponents of compulsory living wages, not that some workers are not receiving their just share of the total income of society, but that that total income may not be large enough to afford that living wage for everyone! The National Bureau of Economic Research has demonstrated that of the total national income, 77 percent is paid as salaries and wages, and the remaining 23 percent is divided up as rents, interest and profits. If, therefore, we were to expropriate all rents, interest and profits, and divide them up in proportion to present incomes, each would receive approximately 30 percent more than he is now receiving—not a very startling increase. However, as we believe in private property, we must admit the justice of rent; as we must admit the productivity of capital, we must grant that interest in payment for its use is a fair charge; and much as we may bewail the baseness of human nature which demands profits as a reward for taking the risks inherent in the conduct of business, we must admit that unless we pay those profits the risks will not be undertaken.

My first letter was incited by a lot of loose thinking; and I made the request that unless the employer in question could be convicted of defrauding the laborer of his wages were he to make the proposed reduction, the critics, in all fairness and decency, should restrict their criticisms to those cases in which they can prove their contentions, and quit generalizing about employers as a class. I wish to reiterate that request.

STEPHEN DU BRUL.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

POEMS

Phantasy

A girl of twenty dreams of these:
A small wee house 'mid poplar trees;
Tall hollyhocks swayed by the breeze.

Patterned sunlight on asters gold;
A carven shelf on which to hold
Her china cups—Dutch blue and old.

A breakfast nook so shining white—
With yellow curtains daring bright;
A sturdy son's blue eyes alight.

A lacquer tray of Chinese red;
Silk patchwork quilt; old walnut bed;
The echo of sweet words unsaid.

These are the things of which she dreams—
A girl of twenty—to her life seems
Like shining, fragile moonlight beams.

MARY ROLWING.

First Sign

When, with my sharpened plough, I prod
The reluctant, inert sod
From sleep, the drowsy turf
Exhales a breath that's some of surf
And drying kelp and tang of brine,
Some of the pungency of pine,
Of dusty bracken, cone-tipped fir,
Of mignonette, of lavendar,
Of sweetbriar, rosemary and rue,
Some of frost, some of dew,
Some of smoke from burning leaves,
Some of sun on ripe corn sheaves—
A potpourri of scents all sealed
In the black breast of a field,
And shattered now for heralding
The white imminence of spring.

ETHEL ROMIG FULLER.

Open-Air Theatre in March

Stale snows drift where summer saw happy faces;
The stage and its ripple of seats are blank as the moon;
The peristyles are only meeting-places
Of querulous winds where the pride of life gathered in June.

The color has gone, and the warmth, and the triumphant young voices,
Life has been washed from the ruddy Dionysus by rain.
Under the cold moon there is no one who grieves or rejoices—
Only wheeling winds dragging dead leaves in their train.

When I die, and revisit the earth eternities after,
I shall find it a playhouse like this, sans audience and mime,
A stained shell of old song and passion and laughter,
Where graveyard winds flirt with the litter of time.

JAMES J. DALY.

Puppets

It was her duty to unsnarl the strings
Before the show, to play the ugly sister,
The cat, or Cinderella, but the things
She loved most were the dolls themselves who kissed her
When she had hooked them to their pegs at night—
They looked at her most understandingly.
The horrid stepmother filled her with fright—
A wicked doll whose eyes could surely see,
So cunningly averted, with such stealth
Her glances followed. Little puppeteer—
The tiny slipper and the pumpkin wealth,
The coachmen, gossamers, and prince, are near—
Will you cheat Cinderella, or yourself,
Who are not more of woman than of elf?

MADEFREY ODHNER.

March Morning

If I should meet you on the street today
And we should stand wind blown and drenched with sun,
I wonder, would the things we'd find to say
Be words of anyone to anyone,

Or would this urgent sun have warmed us through,
And would we be so fresh with wind of spring
That you would say to me, and I to you,
Some old, some lovely, very secret thing?

MAVIS MCINTOSH.

Creation

In principio . . .
Black darkness ruled the deep: no living thing
In all that vast, abysmal void to sing
The praise of God Triune; unheard by ears
The silences of uncreated spheres.
When, lo!
The fiat falls from Lips divine: yon ray
That gleams afar proclaims the primal day.
The Spirit moves abroad—now creatures fair,
Gay choristers of God, sing everywhere.

ROLAND AHEARN.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE PLAY

By R. DANA SKINNER

Miss Le Gallienne's Season

BY THIS time, it is pretty common knowledge that one thing of outstanding importance has happened in the New York theatre world this winter. An experiment begun quietly and without the usual flare of trumpets has become an institution. The Civic Repertory Theatre, housed in the old-fashioned and barnlike structure of the Fourteenth Street Theatre, under the sole guidance and direction of Miss Eva Le Gallienne, has proved itself a success. Whatever the financial outcome of its season may be, there are no longer any top-lofty managers to raise their noses about it. At one-half the price of the majority of Broadway houses, Miss Le Gallienne has given play after play with serious and workmanlike efficiency and, in several instances, with no small artistic triumph. She has not only given the plays, but maintained most of them in repertory, changing from night to night, so that even the casual visitor to New York can, within one week, see the best of them.

Even the average stock company attempts nothing so ambitious as this. There is a vast difference in managerial responsibility between putting on one play for a whole week, and attempting to shift plays nightly, with all the detail involved of keeping scenery intact, costumes, properties and lighting, not to mention the nightly changes of cast, and the difficulties of keeping each performance up to the best standard. Of course, the captious may point out that Miss Le Gallienne's productions lack the smoothness of longer run plays on Broadway, or that occasionally there crops out a feeling of amateurishness due to the imperative haste with which everything must be done. The more well-intentioned may continue to feel, and with some justice, that Miss Le Gallienne has made one serious mistake in attempting to direct the plays herself in addition to all her other burdens. But after all such objections have been raised, the fact still remains that Miss Le Gallienne has shown us, in highly acceptable form, and in one season, such plays as Ibsen's Master-Builder and John Gabriel Borkman, Goldoni's La Locandiera, Chekhov's Three Sisters, Inheritors by Susan Glaspell, and The Cradle Song by Gregorio and Maria-Martinez Sierra.

An accomplishment of this sort has a double value. It is not only New York audiences who benefit from it, but the actors themselves. In days such as these when the best of actors complain of the long months during which they must act in only one part, it is a rare and fine thing for the members of Miss Le Gallienne's permanent company to know that every demand has been made upon their versatility and artistry—they have had to play old parts and young, modern parts and costume parts, sympathetic parts and harsh characterizations. Miss Le Gallienne has wisely not reserved these opportunities for herself alone. If Beatrice Terry has had to play the harsh old sister in Borkman, she has also played the wise and kindly Mother Superior in Cradle Song and the high comedy actress in La Locandiera. Josephine Hutchinson, joining the company in mid-season, has had at least three rôles of outstanding interest. And the same has been true of the men of the company, in spite of the fact that, as a group, they do not measure up to as high a standard as do the women of the company. Most emphatically, Miss Le Gallienne has opened the way toward a new development of the technique of showmanship in New York and many opportunities, until now impossible, for the full expression of individual talent. The Theatre Guild has, of course, gone a long way in the same direction, and likewise with success, but the Guild plays have alternated only from week to week, and to this extent have not followed so completely the repertory system which has been the distinction of European theatres.

Nor has the Guild come so near the heart of the theatre problem for people with modest means. In setting the top price of her performances at a dollar and a half, Miss Le Gallienne has given the final proof of her courage and of her determination to make the theatre once more, in its finest sense, a popular institution. Perhaps this is the appropriate time to suggest that the large number of people, many of them people of wealth, who spend their energies in criticizing the theatrical trend of the day, could devote their energy and their means to a more useful purpose by making possible still further experiments along the lines indicated by Miss Le Gallienne. There are actors in abundance who would welcome the chance to coöperate in such movements. There are also plenty of available men of sound experience in theatrical management and business administration. But such high adventures require economic sinews. They must have initial capital. And in supplying that capital where it will be wisely used for the production of honest plays lies the opportunity for constructive work by high-minded citizens.

Inheritors

THE most recent addition to the repertory of the Le Gallienne season is this play by Susan Glaspell, centering on a theme that is perhaps a few years out of date in its external form, but none the less timely in its deeper implications. Inheritors is a play of four generations in the Middle-West, beginning with the pioneers and ending with the girl of today who has recaptured something of the zeal of her ancestors, after the middle generations have almost lost it. The weakness of the play lies in its too obvious effort to teach a lesson by the milestone method. There are too many parallels and coincidences of speech and action. And at times, too, the dialogue becomes a trifle rhetorical. But to balance this, there is a great deal of sheer poetry and an abundance of authentic feeling woven into the play, not to mention its sharp and often scathing social analysis.

In the first act, we have the sitting-room of the Morton farmhouse in 1879. The pioneer generation is represented by Grandmother Morton, who still remembers the days when Indians clustered about and when she won them by the magic of her cookies! A humorous, toiling and human figure, that grandmother, who knows what it has meant to fight and conquer the soil. Her son, Silas Morton, is the one who has brought her labors to fruition—a well-run farm, and acres of property destined some day to have great value. With only two years of schooling, Silas's education has come chiefly through contact with Felix Fejevary, a Hungarian exiled for his political beliefs who has also lost an arm in the service of his adopted country—a Civil War veteran like Silas himself. In this act, Silas has the dream of a college to be founded on the hill, his gift to the West for what its soil has given him.

The second act brings us to 1920. Morton College, founded through the inspiration of a Hungarian revolutionary, is now an institution, a fact. Its business administrator is none other

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

than Fejevary's son. Silas is dead; his son, a weakling of the soil, is already an aging farmer with a monomania for corn. But Silas's granddaughter, Madeline, whose mother was a Fejevary, is now a student at the college. Felix Fejevary II is trying to obtain state assistance for the college. He has been told that to do so, he must first purge the college of radicalism—make it 100 percent American, and so on. Thus the struggle starts between Fejevary and Madeline Morton. She tries to befriend a "conscientious objector" and some Hindu students who, like the first Fejevary, are in rebellion against their own government. She makes some rash remarks in public, and gets put in jail, at the very time when her uncle is most anxious to avoid this kind of publicity.

From this point on, the play becomes a bitter indictment of the 100 percenters, those who have lost the idealism of an older generation in the pleasant stodginess of prosperity. Opposition makes Madeline almost a fanatic. In the end, she goes back to prison rather than give in to her uncle and sacrifice a principle she believes would have been sacred to her Grandfather Morton. In championing the cause of the conscientious objector, she runs afoul even of her aunt. As a sample of the play's method, when this aunt asks, "Haven't we just fought a war for democracy?" Madeline replies, "Is that any reason why we can't have one?" The play is distinctly not a plea for pacificism, but it is a flaming protest against limiting the convictions and speech of those living in a democracy. Unfortunately, it already seems like a distant flame. It is not old enough to be historical; and not fresh enough to be timely. It is saved only by the beauty and sincerity of most of its writing (I except the purely theatrical blasphemies of the last act) and the amazingly fine acting of Josephine Hutchinson as Madeline Morton.

Miss Hutchinson is exhibiting an ever-increasing range. It is only a little over a year since she first impressed us with her characterization of an empty-headed, movie-struck girl in A Man's Man. Already she is one of the most important members of the Civic Repertory organization. Apparently her talent is an inherited one, as her mother, Leona Roberts, has had an outstanding season in the same company. In this play, Miss Roberts gives us the interesting Grandmother Morton of the first act. Miss Le Gallienne herself, by way of variety, takes the very minor part of Madeline's aunt—a modest gesture as rare in the theatre as it is refreshing.

Three Sisters

IT IS rather late to give an extensive review of this Chekhov play which has been part of the Le Gallienne repertory for some time. But it would be an injustice to omit mention of it altogether. It is part of the genius of Chekhov that he can write a whole play, and an absorbing one, about the inaction of people. That is because he understands so clearly that action of the mind and soul is quite as rich in drama as the outer action of the body. The story of Three Sisters is little more than the pathetic case of three women in a provincial town of Russia who are always planning and yearning to enlarge their lives by going to Moscow, but who somehow never manage to get there. One thing or another prevents it, but chiefly their own inability to take decided action. The play is entirely a drama of character, running the gamut from ineffective dreamers to those preoccupied with life's practical details. Miss Le Gallienne gives it a warm and understanding, if somewhat slow production, in which she herself, Miss Hutchinson, Mary Ward, Beatrice de Neergard, and Paul Leyssac all give unusually clear characterizations.

BOOKS

Life of Eugene Field, by Slason Thompson. New York: D. Appleton and Company. $5.00.

EUGENE FIELD was primarily a newspaperman. One wonders a little, therefore, if he would have written biography in the same style as that chosen by his brother in the inner workings of Chicago journalism day before yesterday, Mr. Slason Thompson. Nothing dates so distinctly as the "press-box" manner. The coagulated, mellifluent adjectives of a slightly remote epoch have nothing in common with the hard-fisted feature reporting of today. That is Mr. Thompson's misfortune. There is some of what must seem the worst writing of the decade in his new, expansive life of Field. There is also some apparent ignorance of the fact that American literary history has been moving rather swiftly since the "good old days." Finally, it is difficult to sympathize with an author who takes the curtain whenever occasion offers, with the sublime grand manner of a Booth conscious of his glory. Mr. Thompson literally besprinkles his pages with what must seem to the utterly guileless or the relatively blasé enthusiastic applause of himself.

And yet after you have worked beyond these rather stiff handicaps, you are deep in a truly remarkable and fascinating life history. The human, historical, and literary aspects of the subjects are rich quarries, in which Mr. Thompson worked carefully during many years. One may correctly mistrust a little the aura of hero-worship which prevails, and yet concede that a man as genuine as Field deserved no less. After a none too striking boyhood and youth he blossoms out—despite a heady genealogical table—into a regular Denver editor and columnist. The same variety of merry pranks as used to prevail in the neighborhood of Mark Twain, and which were probably almost universal in the days before efficiency had triumphed in newspaperdom, budded and blossomed in the Field office. These were also the days of the Tribune Primer, regarding which excellent nonsense Mr. Thompson speaks authoritatively.

The great opportunity came when Melville Stone recruited a staff for the Chicago Morning News. Field's services went to the paper at fifty dollars a week; but the real compensation was a growing and lasting glory. From his dingy, cluttery room, he fed America with a column which set the standard for similar ventures everywhere and even now remains the most notable example of its kind. In it were Horatian echoes, sly whimsy, sentimental verse, deft criticism of manners, subtle hoaxes—a complete repertory of column practices. Mr. Thompson records affectionately the influence which Dr. Frank W. Reilly, and through his mediumship Father Prout, had upon the great word-magician of the Morning News. It is a pity, one may say in passing, that men like Dr. Reilly leave after them so little that guarantees their remembrance. They are like lovable, self-effacing actors; but often the debts famous people owe them reap what is partial repayment in terms of immortality. Concerning other details of Field's personal history, such as his friendship with George W. Cable, one should have liked to know just a little more; but it was, after all, a shy genius who finally retreated, in 1895, to a house "provided with all the modern conveniences, including an ample porch and a genial mortgage." There he died soon after.

Mr. Thompson's book is a mine of valuable, authentic information about the genesis and character of Field's work. The facsimiles offered would alone tempt almost any honest Amer-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ican bibliophile into parting with the purchase price. But there is also a most generous assortment of fugitive pieces, of pleasant anecdote and instructive history. One admires deeply the skill and reverence with which all this has been gathered; and certainly a service has been rendered American letters for which many will be grateful.

What is Eugene Field's own place in these letters? Whimsy and humor, when scattered like the very spice of life, are not normally long-lived. Field's description of Coxey's march to Washington as "the biggest real-estate transfer in history" is a fair sample of his wit, which had the genuine American droll sparkle and never aimed at classic satire. A comparison with Father Tabb, also a purely native product, will show the "poet-priest" to have mastered a compactness and energy of phrase which Field never attained. The difference is the difference between a grammarian and a man who measures by rule of thumb. At any rate, the sentimental poems are what the public has chosen to associate with Field's memory. Little Boy Blue, and Wynken, Blynken and Nod appear in every popular anthology and are treasured as sacrosanct. That their reputation is fully deserved will be cheerfully admitted by everybody who believes that good verse need not always be "metaphysical" in content. From them one might easily discern the literary temper of the era in which they were written.

More generally, however, one suspects that the "saga of Eugene Field" is likely to be talked over steadily by people who like the fresh flavor of life and writing identified with the American press. This genial conversation, which one wishes a very long life, will be stimulated by Mr. Thompson's generous book. Even though this isn't everything one might have desired, it is ample, circumspect and interesting enough to make its way about with very little difficulty.

GEORGE N. SHUSTER.

The Best Short Stories of 1926 and the Yearbook of the American Short Story, edited by Edward J. O'Brien. New York: Dodd, Mead and Company. $2.50.

FROM time to time there are captious comments registered about this yearly survey by Edward J. O'Brien. There is a great deal of growling over his use of the word "best." Some absurdly incline to believe that by best, he means great. This is rather an exaggerated twisting of critical values. For the import of the extensive editorial work that Mr. O'Brien undertakes rests entirely in the general summary that his collected stories give of the changing tendencies, retrogressions, or static conditions prevalent in the writing of short stories during a year. To anyone interested in the contemporary estate of the short story as an art form, The Best Short Stories of 1926 provides an excellent and agreeable medium of approach. Mr. O'Brien has no grandiose ideas of their contents, for he remarks in his introduction, that his "selection of them does not imply the critical belief that they are great stories. A year which produced one great story would be an exceptional one."

One has only to note that five of the twenty stories of this collection have been selected from such unfamiliar magazines as The Midland, Opportunity, the Junior League Bulletin, This Quarter, and the Calendar of Modern Letters, to recognize that Mr. O'Brien's survey is thorough. At the same time, it must be admitted that there is a leavening mediocrity in the majority of these tales. For all the diversity of types—even some experimentation—there is a confining primness of interest and substance. The feeling expressed is often commonplace and hackneyed. The polished craftsmanship so frequently present, is employed with recording the rustling of dead leaves. There is considerable usage of the reversal of situation in a much too slick rounding off of plot. Apparently, perfecting form has choked out gusto and living substance. Even in the pretentious flight of Ira V. Morris's A Tale from the Grave, imagination, taking wing, is clipped, and the fully bodied story never emerges.

The more distinguished stories of the collection are those of such recognized writers as Wilbur Daniel Steele, Ring Lardner, Barry Benefield, Robert Sherwood and three fairly recent newcomers, Ernest Hemingway, Donald Corley, and Arthur Huff Faussett. We do not find the contribution of Manuel Komroff—to whom the collection is dedicated—to contain the merit that Mr. O'Brien in his introduction awards to his book of tales. Briefly, it has nothing of the commended folk motif. Symphonesque, by Faussett, is a lusty bit of experimentation in the vernacular. Lardner, too, renders the American "slanguage" in an amusing account of the antics of two bores on a transcontinental train. The tale of Carrie Snyder, the small-town prostitute, by Benefield, is already well known. Its sentiment is deft rather than effusive. Sherwood has related a highly satirical, sharp anecdote of married life, with simple compactness. The Glass Eye of Throgmorton, by Corley, is a fine grotesque piece that happily blends sound psychology with imaginative treatment. Hemingway sets down another graphic description of a bullfight edged with ironic comment, and Steele has his usual good romance. Decidedly, The Best Short Stories continues to afford the most persuasive survey of the year's crop of short tales. And the present collection offers some engaging reading.

EDWIN CLARK.

A Modern Architectural Work, by Dom Paul Bellot. Boston: Marshall Jones Company. $25.00.

A REVIEW of a book devoted to the illustration of architecture is an unusual feature in a journal of the nature of The Commonweal, but the book here reviewed is itself so unusual and of such interest that the departure, if it may be so called, is one to be recorded with interest and approval.

The book, A Modern Architectural Work, is a well illustrated and printed portfolio of the work of the Benedictine priest-architect, Dom Paul Bellot. There are in it some one hundred loose plates of photographs supplemented by plans and color plates, the latter showing the interesting color arrangements which Dom Bellot has developed in brick for the buildings he has designed.

The informing introduction, contributed by Henry Charlier, together with descriptive matter of the buildings, is beautifully printed in quarto form. In all, the book is a distinct contribution, both to the art of printing and, more important, to the furtherance of the creative art of architecture.

Dom Bellot entered the Benedictine order in the early years of this century, after completing his studies at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, and his life since has been devoted to the experiment of reviving Christian architecture. In its earlier stages, this experiment took a somewhat hesitant form, where the example of German and Dutch precedents, possibly that of Berlage, tended to modify the work of the artist. With a succession of such works as Quarr Abbey in the Isle of Wight, the Abbey at Oosterhout, Eindhoven College and the sanctuary of the church at Heerle, all these in Holland, this remarkable talent had opportunity to mature and to reveal the distinction and thought inspiring it.

It is rare in the works of any man, to find such a mounting

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

development as has taken place in the work of Dom Bellot, and the illustrations of his completed buildings are an excitement to interest in and anticipation for his further and later works. If, as happens, in these buildings his assemblage of forms occasionally shows a less congruous relationship than would be hoped for, the fine spirit and integrity of the work so infuses and animates it with its inner quality, that criticism may well be silent before its high excellence.

The architecture of Dom Bellot is Gothic, but with a difference, a difference in favor of its quality which is constructively inventive. Beside it the essays made locally in the revival of mediaeval design become but shadowy equivalents to the reality that is evidenced in this work. Not only is it Gothic through the use of the dominant form of Gothic architecture, the pointed arch, but more implicitly and exactly through the fact that in the main it is an architecture which derives interest and beauty from the imaginative use of the constructive or structural elements.

The incidental Gothic forms used are secondary to the imaginative use of the structural parts. It is a built architecture. The forms might be of other outline and proportion and Dom Bellot's resulting design would be equally vital and effectively architectural. It is interesting to note that his later works show departures in the form of brick-corbelled openings and arches other than the pointed. The quality of design is heightened in these cases by the freshness and individuality of this detail.

His is a splendid conception of the monumental, and Dom Bellot seems happiest when working in the less hampered domain of church design, rather than in schools and the living portions of monasteries, which are of less interest, while still holding to a plane where merit rules. His exteriors, too, are less moving in their quality than his beautiful interiors, but this is of small matter as related to the fact that in its total, the work of Dom Bellot is probably the most significant contribution to Christian architecture now current. It must be a question indeed just where, in the last four centuries, work of its quality would be found. The gulf between it and the mannered editions of so-called Gothic architecture, which we have come to know in this country, is the immeasurable distance between creative art and the too tame replicas of it. The book is one which every architect or person interested in Catholic church design will view with enthusiasm and delight. This is architecture, not modern or ancient, but architecture and that is indeed a rarity.

BARRY BYRNE.

The Pathway to Reality, by Viscount Haldane. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $5.00.

Reality: A New Correlation of Science and Religion, by Burnett Hillman Streeter. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

EVERY age needs its own apologetic, because the intellectual milieu of each age is somewhat different. In fact, the word "apologetics," no doubt good enough when first used, is itself an example of this need. For today it is too likely to connote something for which we must apologize. An exposition of our own ideas can only be effective if we understand the thoughts of those we address. And so the two books before us may be useful in helping us to do this from two rather different angles.

The Pathway to Reality is the Gifford lectures delivered by Viscount Haldane before the University of Aberdeen in 1902-1904, and now reissued as one volume. "The purpose of Lord Gifford in founding these lectureships," he tells us in his first lecture of the series, "may be said to have been to promote a

A SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

OAK KNOLL School of the Holy Child

AN ELEMENTARY and COLLEGE PREPARATORY SCHOOL

SUMMIT, N. J. **Resident and Day Pupils**

Campus of 12 Acres on One of Summit's Highest Points

Rosemont College at Rosemont, Pa., St. Frideswide's at Oxford and finishing schools in Paris, Rome and Freibourg, are also under the supervision of the Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus. 44 Blackburn Road, Phone Summit 1804

One Macmillan Book a Week

AS MAN TO MAN

Adventures of a Commuter

By CONDÉ B. PALLEN

The book is alive and will blaze many new trails on the great questions of life and death ever at the back of many of our fears. It touches upon well-nigh every topic of vital interest to men and women today. Before it gets done with the reader it has put into his possession a constructive and synthetic view of life that seekers for peace will find very precious. *Price, $2.00*

At Your Bookstore or from

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

60 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, N. Y.

COMMONWEAL PAMPHLETS

NUMBER ONE

Obligations to America

By CARLTON J. H. HAYES

Professor of History, Columbia University, the author of "Political and Social History of Modern Europe," "Brief History of the Great War," and other books.

PROFESSOR HAYES gives in this pamphlet, reprinted from THE COMMONWEAL, the clearest and most significant summary of the debt of the United States to the spiritual forces, the philosophy, and the social ideas of Catholicism, ever presented in such brief form. At the same time he brings out in bold relief the obligations of Catholics to their nation and the services they are called upon to give.

This pamphlet is the first in a series of reprints from THE COMMONWEAL dealing with subjects of general interest.

Ten Cents a Copy, Seven Dollars a Hundred

THE COMMONWEAL

Grand Central Terminal, New York, N. Y.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

thinking consideration of the Nature of God and of His revelation to the actual world. He appears to have believed in the possibility of what Cardinal Newman called a 'science of God,' and defined as 'the truths we know about God put into a system, just as we have a science of the stars and call it astronomy, or of the crust of the earth and call it geology.' "

Viscount Haldane approaches this subject reverently, and with a grave sense of responsibility, but as an Hegelian idealist. The professional student of philosophy can find here a fair exposition of modern idealism. But one who has no professional interest will probably never wade through the 600 pages of the book. It deals with difficult and obscure ideas, and the style does not help to lighten the subject. The paragraphs frequently run to two or more pages, and one paragraph actually occupies six pages.

Contrasted with this heaviness is the book by Canon Streeter. "I shall have failed in my object," he says, "if this book is intelligible only to philosophers, scientists, and theologians. It is addressed in the first instance to the man who has no special training in any of these subjects. That the book as a whole will prove easy reading, I am fairly confident."

The book is easy reading. But apart from indicating a certain trend of thought around us, it has little interest for the Catholic. Now and then the author gives a suggestion that may prove valuable in convincing some wavering mind, as in discussing freedom, but on the whole the sort of religion he arrives at in the end is too tenuous for the stern reality of life.

Streeter became an agnostic while at college during the middle 'nineties. He recovered his faith sufficiently, however, to study for the Anglican ministry. Then later, about the time of the modernist movement, he passed through another intellectual crisis. A second time he was able to square his intellectual convictions with the Anglican ministry, but it was on the basis of modernism. His book, therefore, holds little of value for the Catholic casting about for some method of convincing the modern mind of Catholicism, or of the primary truths common to all Orthodox Christianity.

J. Elliot Ross.

Grain, by Robert Stead. New York: George H. Doran Company. $2.00.

THE simple, epical title of this novel offers a promise which its text hardly fulfills. Mr. Stead presents nothing more than a routine story of the Canadian wheat country, a story, one would guess, composed rather as a pleasant relaxation for its author than under the stress of an inescapable vision. It relates the boyhood and young manhood of Gander Stake, who loves the soil too much to leave it for the war. By his choice he loses the love of his young sweetheart, but gains, from his subsequent unhappiness, the strength of maturity and a true vision of life.

Two choices are open to the writer who desires to make such a book genuinely significant. He may select for his protagonist some real hero, someone who towers above his kind and magnifies their obscure destinies in his own greater proportions; or he may confine himself to average humanity, dealing with it in a comprehending, exalted, really Christian spirit, the spirit of a love which is both philosophic and cherishing. The great Russians, even the most smileless and sorrowing among them, feel this spirit most spontaneously of any writers. An author with a predilection for their chosen material who, nevertheless, has not mastered the secret of their inspired attitude, cannot write a book of lasting distinction, however exact and full his observations and conclusions may be.

Mary Kolars.

BRIEFER MENTION

Evenings with Colorado Poets, edited by Francis S. Kinder and F. Clarence Spencer. Denver: The World Press, Inc. $2.00.

MISS WILKINSON recently informed the Poetry Society that the hopes of the art were embedded more or less in the countryside of America. How true that is I have no way of telling, but it does seem reasonably clear that in the past our poetic literature has been predominatingly rural (or at least provincial) in character. Various local anthologies have undertaken to prove the point. Among these, Evenings with Colorado Poets has a worthy place, not only by reason of the great names which enhance it, but also because there is much nearly first-rate verse in it. There is a genuine mountainy flavor, combined with a typical sentimentalism in Emma Ghent Curtis's songs of the saddle and the trail. Then one pauses at the prairie pastorals of Pearl Riggs Crouch, etched though these are in antique couplets; at the lyric ambitiousness of Jamie Sexton Holme, who aspires to philosophy; and at the musings of Anna Spencer Twitchell. Then one is square up against Harry McGuire and the hopeful younger generation. The editors courteously include Eugene Field and Helen Hunt Jackson, though these had only a bowing acquaintance with Colorado. It is an interesting book, although one must seriously regret the faulty typography (uncorrected even in the third edition) and the practice of cutting down poems arbitrarily to "fit the page."

Liliecrona's Home, by Selma Lagerlöf. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.00.

THIS new edition of one of Selma Lagerlöf's earlier books ought to meet with a welcome because it happens to be a most characteristic Scandinavian folk-tale. The reader never knows quite whether he is in a land of fancy or on terra firma, but the experience is constantly delightful. In this particular instance, the remarkable and charming pastor's daughter, who embodies idealistic imagination, is the central figure toward whom Liliecrona (whose home is in music) comes slowly but inevitably. It is heartening to see how sturdily this gracious book transcends the years, seeming quite as fresh now as it did in the season when the news that Selma Lagerlöf had won the Nobel Prize was announced to the world for the first time. One hopes that it will go far on its new voyage.

CONTRIBUTORS

Katherine Brégy is a critic and poet, and the author of The Poets' Chantry; and Poets and Pilgrims.

Rev. John A. Ryan is professor of moral theology and industrial ethics in the Catholic University of America. He is also director of the Social Action Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference. His books include A Living Wage; and Social Reconstruction.

John Hanlon is a contemporary poet of Canada, whose work is frequently published in current periodicals.

Mark O. Shriver is a member of the Maryland bar, and a writer on economics and jurisprudence.

Mary Rolwing and Irene Wilson are new contributors to The Commonweal.

Rev. James J. Daly, S.J., is a poet and critic, at present on the faculty of the St. Louis University.

Mavis McIntosh and Ethel Romig Fuller are contributors of poetry to current magazines.

Madefrey Odhner contributes poetry to American magazines.

Rev Roland Ahearn, whose poems appear in current publications, is a pastor in Wisconsin.

Edwin Clark is a literary critic for the New York Times and other periodicals.

Barry Byrne is one of the leaders in the newer school of American architecture.

Rev. J. Elliot Ross, C.S.P., chaplain to the Catholic students of Columbia University, is the author of Consumers and Wage Earners; The Right to Work; and Christian Ethics.

Mary Kolars is a writer of literary criticism for current American magazines.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE QUIET CORNER

I counsel thee, shut not thy heart nor thy library.—C. LAMB.

"Not in vain," said Dr. Angelicus, unfolding a recent edition of the New York Evening Post, "not in vain did this reporter, when a schoolboy, study his Longfellow."

"Longfellow's picture, or his poetry, Doctor?" asked Euphemia.

"His poetry, of course," replied the Doctor. "Why should you think it was his picture?"

"Because I used to study his picture in my school reader," said Euphemia, "and spent hours wondering if his name were an abbreviation of 'Longwhiskersfellow.'"

"That was just like you," grumbled the Doctor. "I suppose you were so entranced with his beautiful beard, that you carried away no sense of his poetry. You probably won't even be able to appreciate this item."

"Well, it would only be fair to read it to me before drawing any such rash conclusion," remarked Euphemia.

"The headline," announced the Doctor, "states: 'Varnished American Goes. Unforgotten Is His War-Dance: War-Dance on the Best Fire-Water.'"

"Oh, do go on," begged Euphemia; so Dr. Angelicus, pitching his voice to a solemn, declamatory tone, recited:

"'Chief White Eagle has departed,
Has gone back to Oklahoma,
Never more to see our city;
He got full on fire-water,
Got so full he danced a war-dance.
Came a crowd and Policeman Kimmis.
Kimmis took him to the court-room,
To the Essex Market Court-room,
Where his sentence was suspended.
Chief White Eagle has departed.'"

"Oh, and I missed seeing him before he left!" sorrowed Euphemia.

Then declaimed the Doctor:

"It was well you did not see him—
See White Eagle when his feathers
Were all rumpled and distracted;
When his pocket flask disfigured
His white buckskin nether garments—"

"Stop!" implored Euphemia. "I can't bear any more. Besides, its my turn now. Speaking of Indians, here is an interesting item from my favorite paper, the Meeteetse, Wyoming, News."

So saying, she read:

"'Two beautiful calendars are being given away by the Service Garage. The picture on the one is a maiden very sweet and charming, just stepping out of an automobile and gleefully exclaiming: 'Hello, Everybody!' She wears a white cap and white dress, and stunning brown sweater. The other calendar depicts an Indian maiden reclining against a rock along the braes of a mountain stream. She has a brilliant-colored plume in her hair-band, and around her adonis form is a swaddling gown. The title of this masterpiece is, 'Where Beauty Hides in Mountain Glen.'

"There!" concluded Euphemia. "Never say to me again, as you have so frequently in the past, that, west of Chicago, there is no feeling for art."

Britannicus, who had been a silent listener during the foregoing, now remarked:

"I, too, have a clipping which I should like to read."

MOUNT DE SALES ACADEMY
At CATONSVILLE, three miles from Baltimore
RESIDENT AND DAY PUPILS
Under the supervision of the Sisters of the Visitation
Courses in Music, Languages and College Preparatory
Write Directress for Catalogue
Affiliated with the Catholic University of America

ACADEMY of the SACRED HEARTS
FALL RIVER, MASSACHUSETTS
Boarding and Day School for Girls
Affiliated with the Catholic University, Washington, D. C.
Conducted by the Religious of the Holy Union of the Sacred Hearts
ROME
These Religious also conduct an Establishment in Rome. A large estate beautifully situated on the Via Salaria. Excellent advantages in Modern Languages, Music and Art.
Ladies visiting Rome can be conveniently accommodated. Board and meals moderate.
For further information communicate with the
REVEREND MOTHER, 466 Prospect Street, Fall River, Mass.

Oh, Blessed Feet!

Perfect shoes—you know,
Should always show
Feet smartly shod
And with due regard
To ease and comfort, proper style—
Dame Fashion's fancy to beguile.

So bid your pedic ills adieu,
Procure a smart corrective shoe,
Gaily tread your path—
Bereft of wrath—
Corns and callouses no more deform
Feet shod with shoes marked: "Pediforme."

Regardless of the nature of your foot troubles, "Pediforme" Shoes will aid you to regain normality. Write for our FREE Style Book K that tells how to overcome foot ills in the natural way.

THE PEDIFORME SHOE CO.
36 West 36th Street, New York
322 Livingston Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

In our illustrated folder C

When Catholics Travel

which will be sent to you on request, you will find: Tours in May-June-July to

EUROPE

from $338 up

Half-around-the-World Trip to the

HOLY LAND

including eleven countries

at $1160

Rotala Catholic Tours, Inc.
574 Fifth Avenue, New York City, N. Y.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

They have given an example of heroic virtue that ought never to be lost to that land to which their spirits gave their brave dust.—*N. Y. Times*

The Jesuit Martyrs of North America

By JOHN J. WYNNE

The only complete story of these heroes of our American Origins.

Sequel to Parkman's "The Jesuits in North America."

Three Portraits. Three valuable maps. Index and list of books consulted.

In cloth, gilt letter, Warren paper, 250 pages.....$1.50

The Universal Knowledge Foundation

19 Union Square W. New York, N. Y.

ACADEMY OF OUR LADY

95th and Throop Streets, LONGWOOD, CHICAGO, ILL.

Accredited Boarding and Day School for Girls

Conducted by the Sisters of Notre Dame

ACADEMIC COURSE—Prepares for College or Normal Entrance

MUSIC—Conservatory Methods in Piano, Violin and Vocal

ART—Special Advantages. Three Studios Open to Visitors at All Times. Graded Courses in Both Music and Art Departments Lead to Teachers' Certificates and Diplomas

Mount St. Michael's

NEW YORK'S NEWEST AND MOST UP-TO-DATE SCHOOL

CONDUCTED by the MARIST BROTHERS of the SCHOOLS

Select Boarding and Day School for Boys

HIGH SCHOOL, GRAMMAR, PRIMARY

Wonderful Location—Twenty-two Acres—Terms Reasonable

Nereid (East 238th St.) and Murdock Aves.
Bronx, New York City

Write or Phone: FAIRBANKS 2013

PRINTING SERVICE

Our working force is composed of trained men, selected because of their ability and willingness to make extreme efforts to satisfy our customers.

This feature of our organization accounts to a large extent for the long list of representative concerns that have continued to send us their printing orders for many years.

May we estimate on your printing?

Catalogs, Magazines, Books, Commercial Printing

BURR PRINTING HOUSE

Cor. Frankfort and Jacob Streets, New York City

But Dr. Angelicus was off again:

"You shall read it, my good Britain,
Let it be a noble clipping;
If it weren't for these small items
In the news, we would be silent,
And our library would perish—"

"I think there are some people who wish that it would," interrupted Euphemia. "However, let us hear your item, Britannicus."

"This," remarked Britannicus, "is an account of an exciting incident which occurred centuries ago, and which led to a gift from the Count de Provence, later King Louis XVIII of France, of a beautiful tapestry to the de Bodisco family. The Count was a fugitive on a ship, and an ancestress of the de Bodiscos, the captain's wife, saved him from arrest. The item states:

" 'She hastened to her husband's cabin, where the Count de Provence was concealed, and bade him hide under the cushions of the bed while she reclined on it, feigning illness. The officers came to search the cabin. A breathless moment ensued for the Count and his benefactors.'

"I'll say it must have—for the Count, at least," summed up Britannicus.

"He probably had asthma for the rest of his life," agreed the Doctor. "But by the way, what's happened to our spring poets? Although we've had some beautiful balmy days lately; and although some time since, the first robin was seen and reported at Douglaston, Long Island, yet has our mail been quite devoid of the usual poetical outpourings common to spring."

"Oh, has it?" asked Britannicus significantly, holding up a large sheaf of manuscripts. "Here they are in plenty—you just haven't seen them yet."

"Are there any particularly fine poems among them?" inquired the Doctor.

"Er—ah—well, here is a sample," avoided Britannicus, as he selected one. "It's called Spring. Harken:

" 'I saw a bird
And I saw a street,
And the street was long
And the bird said tweet;
And I saw a cab
And the cab was blue,
And I took the cab
To a spot I knew.
To a spot I know
Where the grass is long,
And I stood and harked
To the birdie's song;
And the trees were green
And the bird said tweet,
And the grass came right
Up over my feet.
COMFORT PLUMPTREE BRUNDAGE.' "

"What an interesting name!" exclaimed Euphemia. "Have you ever met her who bears it?"

"*He* came in to deliver the poem personally," replied Britannicus, "so I must confess that I have had the pleasure."

"And what is Comfort Plumptree Brundage like?" asked Euphemia, curiously. He sounds as though he had a lovely complexion."

"Well," replied Britannicus, "the day he called, he looked flushed and distinctly spring-feverish."

—THE LIBRARIAN.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED